Chapter 14

World Missions through History

Weeks 4-7

In Acts Chapter Five, when the apostles were arrested for preaching in the name of Jesus, a Pharisee named Gamaliel made a very remarkable statement: “Men of Israel,” he said, “take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men...for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you can not overthrow it—lest you even be found to fight against God.”

Two thousand years since these words were spoken, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has spread from this handful of disciples—to millions of believers throughout the world! Although many governments and religious leaders have tried to stop it, the message of Christianity could NOT be overthrown!

It is exciting to look at the history of the world and to see how God has been at work—preserving and expanding His kingdom throughout time. From the early church through the Dark Ages and the Reformation, to the Age of Exploration and Colonization, to today’s current world missions, the Gospel of Jesus Christ remains alive and well!

In the next four weeks you will learn about the many events and individuals God has used to see His message of love shared throughout the world.

As you study this history—and our Christian heritage—take time to consider how God could use YOU to be part of completing the task of world evangelism.

WEEK 4: THE DARK AGES/
MEDIEVAL EUROPE
The Rise of the Roman Catholic Church

WEEK 5: THE CRUSADES
AND THE HOLY WARS/LATE MIDDLE
AGES—Knights, Roman Missions, Early Islam

WEEK 6: THE RENAISSANCE
AND REFORMATION
Germany, Rise of Protestantism, Knowledge

WEEK 7: THE AGE OF EXPLORATION
AND COLONIZATION
Spain, Columbus, Early Missions
WEEK 4
World Missions Through History
Emphasis: The Dark Ages/Medieval Europe

Introduction: We will look at the history of the western world from the end of the Great Roman Empire to the beginning of the Crusades (approximately A.D. 500 to 1000). Our emphasis will be on the rise of the Roman Catholic Church, and the subsequent distortion of Christianity. Our purpose is to evaluate it through God's eyes and His overall purpose for the earth. We will study about the Early Medieval (Middle) Ages and Medieval medicine and health.

LIBRARY AND MEDIA SEARCH

CHILDREN'S BIBLE STORYBOOK
    Conversion of Saul

CLASSIC STORIES
    Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella, Robin Hood

BOOK TITLES
    From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya by Ruth A. Tucker
    World Missions Manual - Part 1
    The Middle Ages—A Cultural Atlas for Young People
        by Mike Corbishley
    CASTLE and CATHEDRAL by David Macaulay

BOOK TOPICS
    Middle Ages, Dark Ages, Medieval Europe
    Emperor Theodosius I, Constantine
    Jerusalem, Pilgrimage, Shrines
    Monks, Monastic life, Friars
    The Roman Catholic Church,
    Cathedral, Gothic architecture, Stained glass
    Medieval medicine
    Medieval peasants/ Feudal system
    Medieval art

MUSIC
    Gregorian chants
    Classical music, Medieval minstrels
    Swan Lake ballet by Tschaikovsky

FAMILY VIDEOS
    Joan of Arc, Wycliffe, John Huss

OTHER MEDIA
    Watch for current news on Europe, Italy, the Vatican, or the Roman Catholic Church
DAY 16
WEEK 4 - MONDAY

World Missions through History
Emphasis: The Dark Ages/Medieval Europe

FAMILY DEVOTIONS
• OPENING EXERCISES/PRAYER
BIBLE READING: ACTS 1:2
• FAMILY DISCUSSION

How did the early church begin? How does this church compare with the religious church of the early Medieval Ages? What was the purpose for receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). Talk about Peter’s boldness to preach the Gospel and how he had been afraid and denied Christ. Read Acts 1:41-47 and talk about God’s purpose for the church. Describe their daily life.
• PRAYER FOCUS

Pray your family would not have a religious spirit, but a powerful life-changing commitment to Jesus Christ. Pray God would give you His boldness and the power of His Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel in your city, state, country, and to the ends of the earth.
• BIBLE MEMORY: ACTS 1:8

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
• LEARNING METHOD

Use a stick of dynamite (power), a dove (Holy Spirit), a wet-nest (witness), all in the center of a bullseye target (representing areas of the world).
• PRAYER PROJECT:

TARGET YOUR “JERUSALEM”

Get a city map, a state map, a map of your country, and then look at your map of the world. Talk about this week’s memory verse and how Jesus came not only to restore the earthly kingdom of Israel, but He came for the whole world. Next, relate your home city, state or province, neighboring states or provinces, county and country to what Jesus talked about when He said that we would be witnesses “in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and even to the ends of the earth.” Pray for your city, that Jesus would be Lord and many would be saved.

READING/LANGUAGE ARTS

• READING


3. Have younger children read a book about the Middle Ages.


• WRITING

Have your children write for fifteen minutes in their prayer journals. Encourage them to share their feelings and what the Lord is sharing with them through their lessons and Bible reading. This should be a time of free writing, without having to be concerned about spelling, style, or punctuation. Let your children know that their journal will be kept private (although you may have to briefly look at it to make sure they are making the best use of their time).

• LANGUAGE ARTS

1. Carefully write this week’s memory verse. Check for neatness and penmanship.

2. Select spelling words. Write these in your spelling notebook, their definitions, or use each word in a sentence.

• FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Use separate curriculum or teaching tapes. Encourage your family that they could someday use a foreign language to share the Gospel with others.

GEOGRAPHY

1. When learning the memory verse for this week, look at a Bible map of the Holy land and find Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and “the ends of the earth” from their perspective. Compare to modern maps of your city, state, country, and world.

2. Look at a map of the Roman Empire at its height, and then how it was divided into the Western and Eastern Roman Empires in A.D. 395 at the death of Emperor Theodosius I.

3. Look at a map of Medieval Europe. How was this different from the Great Roman Empire? What countries were in Europe at that time? How do these compare with Europe today? Did the boundaries of these countries change during the years A.D. 500-1000?
DAY 17
WEEK 4 - TUESDAY
World Missions through History

FAMILY DEVOTIONS
• OPENING EXERCISES/PRAYER
BIBLE READING: ACTS 4

• FAMILY DISCUSSION
Focus on verses 24-30 and how the early church prayed for boldness to preach the Gospel. What were some challenges they faced and how do those compare with challenges we may face today in our country?

• PRAYER FOCUS
Begin by reading the prayer the disciples prayed in the verses above and then pray the Lord would grant your family boldness to speak God's Word. Remember that "the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." (James 5:17)

• BIBLE MEMORY
Review Acts 1:7-8 and the memory pictures.

READING/LANGUAGE ARTS
• READING
  1. Read "Our Heritage, A Brief Summary of World Missions" from this curriculum.
  2. From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya, pages 31-37. Read about Polycarp, Perpetua, and Ulfila.
  3. Read about the religion and importance of the Medieval church from any library book such as The Middle Ages, A Cultural Atlas for Young People by Mike Corbishley, pages 38-44.

• WRITING
  Describe the church of the Middle Ages. What were their leaders like? Where did they meet for worship? Why did they place such importance on elaborate buildings, statues, and badges? Were the common people and the religious leaders treated equally? What were pilgrimages? Why did the people want to travel to shrines of dead saints or to the Holy Land? Compare this Medieval church to the early church of New Testament times. In what ways were they similar or different? What were some good aspects of the Medieval church (example: preserving the Holy Bible, building hospitals, etc.)

• LANGUAGE ARTS
  Check writing for correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization and grammar. Talk about their mistakes and how to improve, and encourage them on their strengths. If necessary, have them re-write their essay correctly and neatly. (You may use days for this assignment.)

HISTORY
The goal for this week is to understand WHY the Roman Empire fell and to look at the importance of the Roman Catholic Church in Medieval Europe.

• MARK YOUR TIMELINE
  A.D. 64 Persecution from Nero begins
  A.D. 67 Martyrdom of Peter and Paul by A.D. 100 New Testament written
  A.D. 117 Height of the Roman Empire
  A.D. 313 Constantine and The Edict of Milan (Christianity now legal)
  A.D. 375 Christianity official and only religion of Rome
  A.D. 369-395 Emperor Theodosius I begins to persecute all other religions, forcing all to become Christian
  A.D. 395 Rome divided at the death of Emperor Theodosius I

• HISTORY STUDY QUESTIONS
  1. What happened to the Christian church during times of persecution? (fervent prayer, sacrifice, dispersion, growth, hardship)
  2. How did the church change when Constantine declared Christianity legal? Did it have to change? Could the church have remained strong if the early believers kept the same fervency and prayer life? What is Christianity like in our free country?
  3. Discuss how Emperor Theodosius I began to persecute all other religions. Is this good? Is this any different than persecuting Christianity? Is it possible to force someone to become a Christian?
  4. Why do you think the Roman Empire wanted to become Christian? What do you think was their motivation? (political advance, country unification, true conversion version)

RELIGION FOCUS
• THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH
FOUNDATIONS OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM
(See history section above.)
DAY 18

WEEK 4 - WEDNESDAY
World Missions through History

FAMILY DEVOTIONS
• OPENING EXERCISES/PRAYER
BIBLE READING: ACTS 5
• FAMILY DISCUSSION
Talk about Ananias and Sapphira and the importance of living a pure and holy life before the Lord. Can we lie to God?

What happened to the disciples when they were thrown into prison? What did they immediately do when they were out?

Focus on verse 35-39 and the words of the Pharisee Gamaliel. See the introduction to this chapter, and talk about how the Gospel of Jesus has not "come to nothing," but instead has expanded throughout the earth.

• PRAYER FOCUS
Pray we would not be selfish in our giving and that we would never try to be dishonest before God in our actions or attitudes. Pray for the Lord to cleanse your heart from any impure thoughts or motivations.

• BIBLE MEMORY

READING/LANGUAGE ARTS
• READING
1. From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya, pages 38-48, Patrick, Columba, Baptizing the Masses, and Boniface.

(Period 2: Barbarians, Vikings, and Saracens)

3. Read about the people of the Middle Ages and their everyday life: food, living conditions, clothing styles, education, etc. There is an interesting section on "Everyday Life" pages 80-81, from The Middle Ages—A Cultural Atlas for Young People.

4. I Heard Good News Today, pages 16-17, about St. Augustin.

• WRITING
Imagine what it would have been like if YOU were born in the Early Middle Ages in Europe. Decide if you would like to be a rich lord or king, a priest or monk, or a common peasant.

Write a creative story about your typical day. Include details about your home, food, religion, education (or lack of it), and possibly your view of the world.

• LANGUAGE ARTS
Emphasize creative writing, and style as you review the story. Review spelling words.

SCIENCE
• MEDIEVAL MEDICINE AND HEALTH
During the Middle Ages the people had a very different view of health and medicine. Herbs were the only primary source of healing and people often thought any sickness was "punishment from God." Some of their medical practices included blood-letting (getting rid of the bad blood if a person was sick or using leeches to suck out the blood).

Look at several books that talk about these medieval medical practices and compare with simple health practices today.
DAY 19
WEEK 4 - THURSDAY
World Missions through History

FAMILY DEVOTIONS
• OPENING EXERCISES/PRAYER
BIBLE READING: ACTS 7
• FAMILY DISCUSSION
  Talk about Stephen, the first Christian martyr, and relate to other Christian martyrs during the Middle Ages and even today. What did Stephen preach about in his last sermon? Talk about the importance of a person’s last words and look at who was observing Stephen’s death. (Acts 8:1)
  Focus on Stephen’s willingness to obey the Lord no matter what his personal consequence would be, and how we need to have that same dedication.
• PRAYER FOCUS
  Pray for Christians who are being persecuted, imprisoned, or martyred for their faith. (Yes, this IS happening today!) Pray these brothers and sisters would be encouraged, full of God’s peace that passes all understanding, and that they would have a joy in the midst of their suffering, and this joy would be their strength. Pray even for people to be saved in jail.
• BIBLE MEMORY
  Review Acts 1:7-8. Practice saying or writing the verse for tomorrow’s test.

READING/LANGUAGE ARTS
• READING
  1. From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya, read sections on Anskar, Raymond Lull, and Las Casas from pages 49-58.
  2. World Missions Manual - Part 1, pages 4-15 to 4-18. (Period 3: Winning the Vikings)
  3. Read about monastic life in the Middle Ages from a library book.
• WRITING
  Copy one whole chapter from the Bible. (Decide which chapter each child should copy depending on his or her age and ability.) Think about the life of the monks and friars and their monastic life. Be thankful God allowed the Bible to be preserved throughout time.

• LANGUAGE ARTS:
  1. Emphasize perfection in the copying of the scripture. “Any mistake could lead to a distortion of the scripture.” Take notice of punctuation.
  2. Practice taking a spelling test.

MATH
• GEOMETRY IN GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE
  Draw a picture of the front of a Gothic cathedral. Use a ruler and look at all the shapes and geometric designs that are included. If this is too hard for young children, have them look for shapes in pictures of medieval cathedrals or castles.

ARTS AND CRAFTS
• ART
  1. Look at pictures of medieval art and compare with art from Israel and Rome. Which of these two comparisons is closer? How did the medieval church view the making of images?
  2. Examine the elaborate calligraphy writing of the medieval monks and friars. Look at the intricate details of the letters and the side-margin decorations.
• CRAFT
  1. Find an example of calligraphy letters. With a special fountain pen (preferably the kind that you need to dip in ink—or even a feather and ink) practice writing a scripture verse in calligraphy. Design a large detailed letter—possibly the first letter of your name or the first letter from the Bible verse—in calligraphy. OR:
  2. Make a cover (or title page) with fancy calligraphy for a research project on the Middle Ages.
DAY 20

WEEK 4 - FRIDAY
World Missions through History

FAMILY DEVOTIONS:
• OPENING EXERCISES/PRAYER
BIBLE READING: ACTS 9
• FAMILY DISCUSSION
How did Saul convert to Christ? God loves everyone, including those who are in terrible sin, and those who are persecuting others for their faith. Who talked to Paul from the bright light? How do you know it was Him? Can we expect God to reveal Himself to those who have not yet heard the Gospel or does God want to use us to share His good news? Had Saul heard the Gospel before? (Think of Stephen's last sermon.) How do you think Ananias felt when God told him about Saul's conversion? Why was he afraid?
• PRAYER FOCUS
Pray for those people who have never heard the Good News. Pray someone would go to them to share the news of Jesus Christ. Pray for people who are persecuting Christians. Pray they would be convicted of their sins, their hearts would be softened, and some would be saved.
• BIBLE MEMORY
Test: Write or say Acts 1:7-8. Ask, “What do these verses mean to you?”

READING/LANGUAGE ARTS
• READING
1. From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya, sections on Francis Xavier, Matthew Ricci on pages 59-66.
2. Read about poetry and music in the Middle Ages. In an encyclopedia, look up “Classical Music”, “Gregorian Chants”, “The Middle Ages” and “Medieval Minstrels.”
3. Read a classical fairy tale set in the time of the Middle Ages such as Sleeping Beauty or Cinderella, or a medieval tale.
4. Read about Saul's conversion from a Bible storybook.
• WRITING
Write a poem about the religion of the Middle Ages. Incorporate the contrast of the beauty of the buildings and the stained glass windows, to the cold, dark, spiritual emptiness inside. Possibly include examples of true Christians who suffered for their faith. Use descriptive words, and words with feeling and emotion. After your poem is written, try singing it in a simple tune (to the strum of a small stringed instrument if you have one), or as a chant.

• LANGUAGE ARTS
1. Spelling Test. Write misspelled words five times, or put on next week’s lesson for repetition.
2. Emphasize a certain part of speech in the poem. For example, the poem could emphasize adjectives and descriptive words about the Middle Ages, or verbs and actions of medieval life, or nouns and medieval objects, etc.

MUSIC
1. Listen for medieval music and minstrels in this week's family video.
2. Look at a musical staff. (This was developed by a monk named Guido d’Arezzo.)
3. Play the C scale on a piano. (Realize that the intervals between the notes was developed by another monk named Odo de Clugny.)
4. Listen to a cassette tape of medieval music or a classical ballet with medieval characters such as Swan Lake ballet by Tchaikovsky.

INTERNATIONAL MEAL
• AREA EMPHASIS: MEDIEVAL EUROPE
The common medieval peasants and monastic monks lived very simple lives, unlike the grand medieval feasts you may see in the movies. (For added effect, eat with only your fingers and a spoon. The fork was not invented until the Renaissance.)

Medieval Europe

Typical Medieval Peasant Meal

- dark bread
- boiled eggs
- boiled cabbage
- turnips
- sometimes a small serving of poultry

FAMILY VIDEOS
Joan of Arc, Wycliffe, John Huss