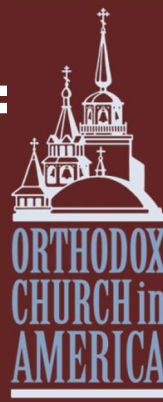


Blessed is the Kingdom: An Orthodox Church School Curriculum



Lesson 14 3-5th grades

Scripture: The New Testament

Objective: Students will understand that the New Testament fulfills the law and looks back to Christ.

Lesson Introduction

5 min

Start by **listening** to the Liturgy Link of the Epistle:

The reading of the Scripture at Liturgy is essential. There is an unbreakable link between the word (Scripture) and the sacrament (Eucharist). By reading the Scripture at the Liturgy it prepares us for and leads up to the chalice. Just like receiving the Eucharist helps us become Christ like, so does reading the Scriptures.

Hold up the Orthodox Study Bible and **say**:

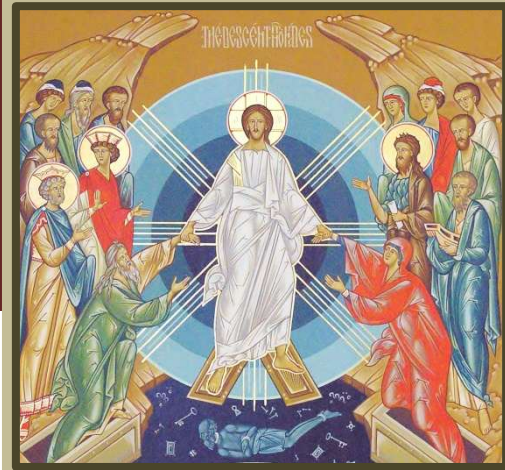
When reading the Bible it is important that we listen, if we try to read in a place with a lot of noise and distractions it may be challenging. Let's play The Noisy Circle Game.

Have students **sit** in a circle. **Choose** a topic such as, "your favorite movie", "your last birthday party", or "your favorite animal". **Set** a timer for 30 seconds. **Explain** that when you say go, everyone in the circle begins talking about the topic at the same time. When the timer goes off, **ask** each student about someone else's answer. Then **say**:

It's impossible to listen while talking ourselves and in such a loud chaotic environment. Let's try one more time, but this time only one person talks at a time, and the rest listen quietly.

Try this, and then **say**:

See how much easier it is? When we read the Bible, we should pray first, and then treat it as a letter written especially for us by God. It takes time to read it and have it seep into our head, our hearts, and let it transform our lives.



Opening Prayer

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth who art everywhere and fillest all things. Treasury of Blessings, and Giver of Life: Come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good one.

Liturgy Links

<https://www.oca.org/media/video/20th-aac-thursday-morning-divine-liturgy>

The Epistle

Skip to 44:55-46:10 for this portion

Supplies Needed

- Audio of the Epistle

Lesson—25 min

Supplies Needed

- New Testament Book Shelf Printable
- New Testament Book Printable
- Scissors (one per student)
- Crayons or Markers
- Orthodox Study Bible (one per student if possible)

Teacher Resources

OCA Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs: A Manual for Adult Instruction

<https://www.oca.org/cdn/PDFs/2023-0609-EOCB.pdf>

Chapter 7 The Scriptures in the Orthodox Church

The New Testament

<https://www.oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith/doctrine-scripture/new-testament>

During the Liturgy we read from the New Testament. As we talked about, it is important that we are attentive. You will even hear the priest remind us by saying, “Let us attend”. Like the Old Testament, the New Testament is divided into categories and there are many books in each of these categories.

The Orthodox Study Bible New Testament has 27 books in it. These can be organized into four categories:

- **The Gospels**-recall the life of Jesus Christ
- **Acts**-goes through the Acts of the Apostles, mainly Peter and Paul’s lives starting with Pentecost
- **The Epistles**-letters written by Paul instructing churches and communities; **The General Epistles**- letters written by the name of each book to instruct communities. The Epistles are read during the Liturgy.
- **Revelation**-speaks prophetically about current and future events and looks toward judgment and salvation

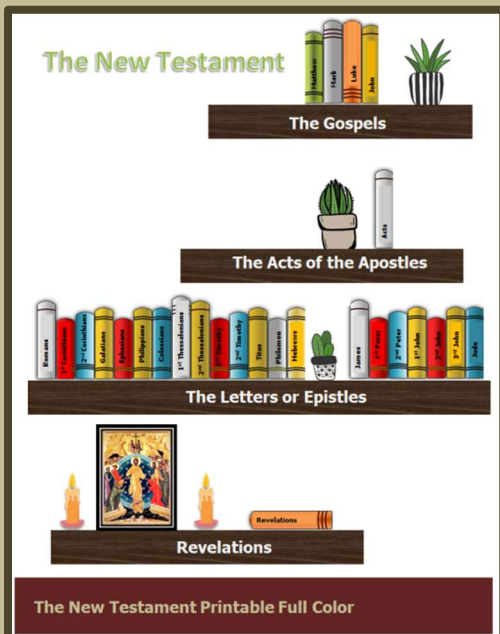
Hand out the New Testament Book Shelf printable. Decide based on the amount of time you have and the ability of your class if you’d like them to each have a Full Color Book Shelf, a Coloring Page Book Shelf, or a Build Your Own Book shelf. The Build Your Own requires cutting and gluing (the cutting could be done prior to class), the black and white coloring page requires them just to color a premade page, and the full color just requires pointing and looking.

Start by pointing out, coloring, or gluing The New Testament words to the page. Then **say**:

This is the book shelf library for the New Testament. Why do you think we have four book shelves? (There are 4 categories of books in the New Testament. Let’s review them.)

As you go over each book shelf have students, **point** to, **color**, or **glue** their shelves and the books on them. **Review** the purpose of each category of books.

- **The Gospels**-recall the life of Jesus Christ
- **Acts**-goes through the Acts of the Apostles, mainly Peter and Paul’s lives starting with Pentecost
- **The Epistles**-letters written by Paul instructing churches and communities; **The General Epistles**- letters written by the name of each book to instruct communities
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Lesson Continued

5 Minute Bonus

Bishop Icon Walk

Bishops are tasked with teaching the scriptures, so icons show them holding a book—The Gospel book. This is because they preach from it. See if you can find icons of Bishops in your church holding the Gospel.

You could also point out the writers of the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; if they are on the iconostasis doors. If not, you could show students a picture of iconostasis doors with them featured.

Supplemental Ideas

Jenga Full Bible Version

If you are up for purchasing a second Jenga set, you could write the New Testament books on the second set, and add it into the Old Testament Jenga set. This gives you a game that can be pulled out any time as a quick and fun review of the books of the Bible.

Bible Book, Chapter, & Verse Relay

Hand everyone a Bible, and call out a book of the Bible, a chapter, and a verse. See who can find it first. If you'd like read it, and see if they know what is happening at that time in the Bible.

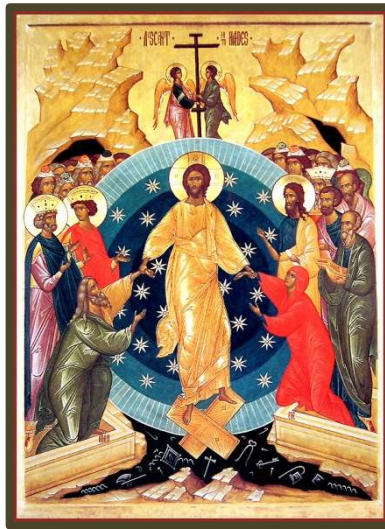
Once all of the books and shelves are completed, students may **color** or **glue** the plants, candles, and icon onto their shelves. As you look at the icon, **ask**:

What is this an icon of? (The Resurrection)

Who is Christ reaching out to? (Adam and Eve)

What are Adam and Eve standing in? (Their coffins)

Christ is raising them to Paradise with Him. Christ destroyed the power of death, and this is shown in Christ resurrecting Adam and Eve. Just like we hear in St. John Chrysostom's sermon that is read at Pascha "O death where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory? Christ is Risen and thou art overthrown."



Hand out Orthodox Study Bibles, and then **say**:

Like we did last time, let's look in our Bibles for the New Testament.

Find the first book of the New Testament. (Matthew)

Matthew is only one of the Gospels. Let's find the other 3. (Mark, Luke, and John)

What comes next? (Acts)

After Acts is all of Paul's letters or Epistles, followed by additional Epistles, and finally Revelation. How many chapters are in Revelations? (22) How many verses are in the last chapter of Revelation? (21)

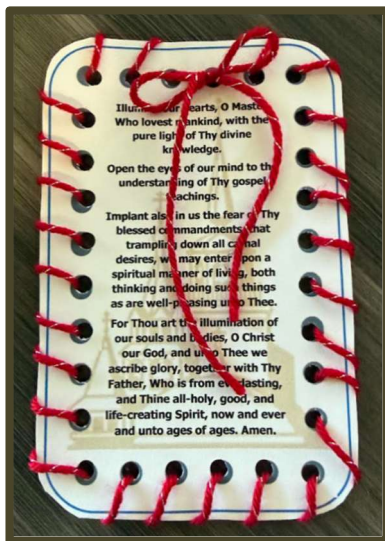
Lesson Activities

Laced Prayer Card—10 min

Supplies needed: printable prayer card (one per student), hole punch, scissors, yarn (four feet per student), tape

Prior to class print the prayer card printable and cut out the prayer card, one per student. Using a hole punch, punch out each of the lacing circles. Putting a piece of tape on the end of their string will make it easier. Students start at the top (3rd hole in) and go around the edge of the card lacing through each hole. They go in the front of each hole to have it wrap around the card. Once they reach the top (4th hole in), they go in from behind the card and then tie the two ends together to make a bow.

Read through the prayer, and explain that this is a good prayer to read prior to reading the Bible. They could keep it in their icon corner at home, in their Bible, or in their Bible tote bag they made last week.

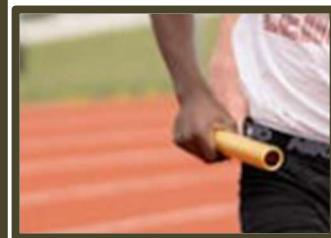


Baton Relay Race—10 min

Supplies needed: paper towel tubes (2), cones or items to run around, room to run

Split the class into two teams. Teams line up behind a line. The first person in line receives a paper towel tube "Baton". Then explain:

When we read scripture it must be read with tradition. Christ and His apostles have passed the teaching of the scriptures down. They are handed from one to another like you hand off a baton in a relay. To run this relay, the first person runs up and around the cone, and then hands the "baton" to the next person in line. Just like the apostles passed down the understanding of the scriptures. The second person runs up and around the cone, and then hands off the "baton". This continues until everyone has had a turn. The team who finishes first wins.



Closing Thoughts— 5 min

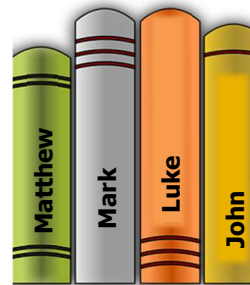
Remind them that the Old Testament gives us the Law, and looks forward to Christ. Then ask: *what does the New Testament do?*

It fulfills the Law and looks back to Christ.

Closing Prayer

It is truly meet to bless you, O Theotokos, ever-blessed and most pure, and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without defilement you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos we magnify you!

The New Testament



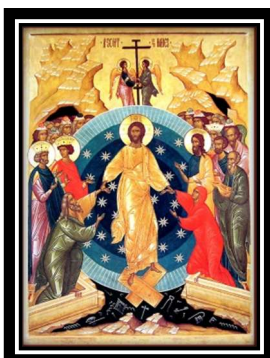
The Gospels



The Acts of the Apostles



The Letters or Epistles



Revelations

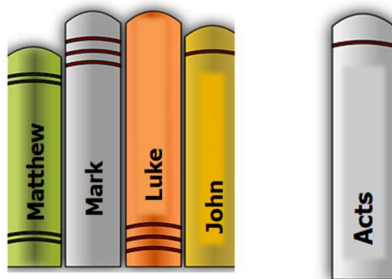
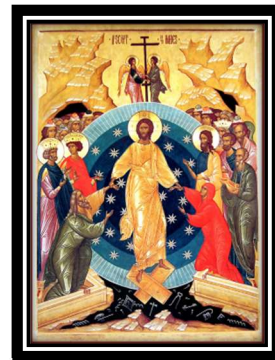
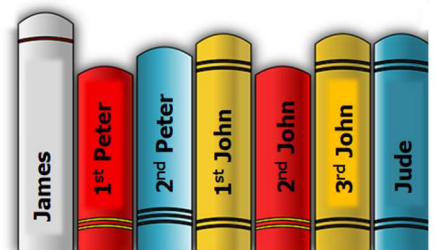
The New Testament

The Gospels

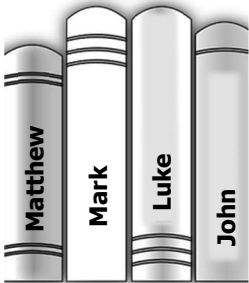
The Acts of the Apostles

The Letters or Epistles

Revelations



The New Testament



The Gospels



The Acts of the Apostles



The Letters or Epistles



Revelations

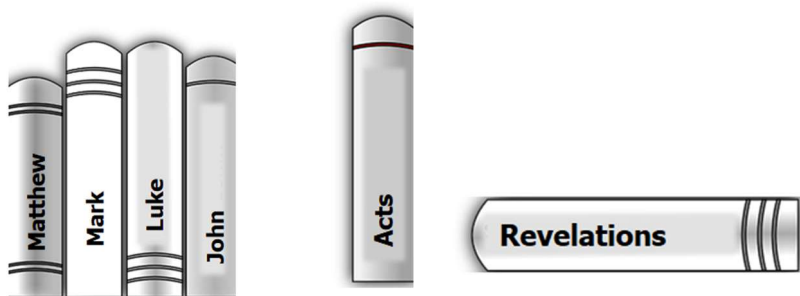
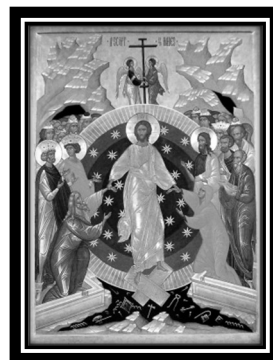
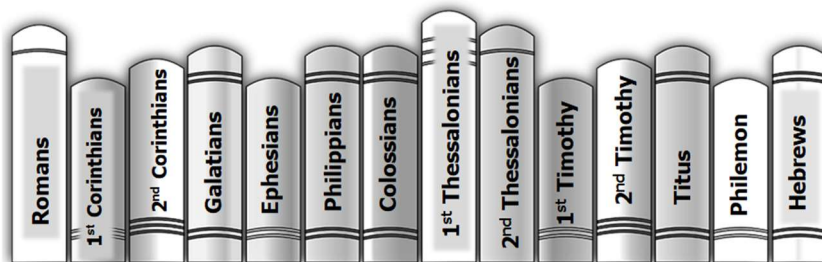
The New Testament

The Gospels

The Acts of the Apostles

The Letters or Epistles

Revelations



The New Testament Build Your Own Coloring Page

Craft Printable—Laced Prayer Card

