



Bible Education
For Public School Students

DURING SCHOOL HOURS



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Students need **THE WORD OF GOD**

It's not hard to see what's happening in our nation. Decades ago, our nation systematically removed Bible education from the public school day. And it's not hard to see the effect: Fear, division and strife rule the day. Christians, who hold the remedy to society's ailments, feel always on the defensive, shut out of the cultural conversation. **The life-giving Word of God is reaching fewer and fewer ears and eyes, especially among our next generation.** The inverse correlation between the following statistics is not surprising to Bible-believing Christians.

All-time *highs* among youth:

Anxiety
Depression
Suicide

All-time *lows* among youth:

Bible Literacy
Church Attendance
Professions of Faith



THE U.S. SUPREME COURT

"We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being. When the State encourages religious instruction or cooperates with religious authorities by adjusting the schedule of public events to sectarian needs, it then follows the best of our traditions, for it then respects the religious nature of our people and accommodates the public services to their spiritual needs."

JUSTICE WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS

Zorach v. Clauson (1952)

The untapped OPPORTUNITY

Around the time when the Bible and prayer were being removed from public education, a window of opportunity was opened. The U.S. Supreme Court decision *Zorach v. Clauson* determined that teaching the Bible during the public school day was constitutional and therefore legal in all 50 states under three conditions:

- 1 OFF SCHOOL PROPERTY**
Program must be held off site of school premises.
- 2 PRIVATELY FUNDED**
No government funds can be used for this program.
- 3 PARENT PERMITTED**
Parental permission is required for students to participate.

For over 70 years, this opportunity, legally known as "released time religious instruction," has remained almost completely unknown to the Christian church. The few programs that do exist tend to operate informally and on a small scale. LifeWise Academy wants to change that by providing a replicable model that can be implemented by any community nationwide.



See How
LifeWise Works



The LifeWise SECRET SAUCE

LifeWise is building and refining an innovative ministry approach with an uncompromising commitment to three qualities:



GOSPEL-CENTERED

Keeping the gospel at the center of our program is our only hope for genuinely changing the hearts of the next generation. While many Bible education programs focus exclusively on moral instruction as biblical principles, LifeWise is intentionally explicit with the gospel message of Jesus' death for sin and resurrection. It is this gospel message, planted in the hearts and watered, that sprouts, grows and bears fruit.



EXCELLENT

Maintaining the highest standards of excellence in all areas is necessary for the success of our mission. Too often, Christian ministries gain a reputation for executing their missions with mediocrity. However, LifeWise must compete in the marketplace of the many programs and activities surrounding the life of a public school. Therefore, we are diligent to demonstrate excellence in every area, knowing that we represent the King.



COMMUNITY-DRIVEN

Our mission to offer Bible education during school hours is only possible where local communities wholeheartedly embrace and support it. LifeWise is committed to a community-driven model, requiring active local involvement to ensure every program is rooted in genuine support and shaped by the needs of those it serves. LifeWise empowers community members to come together to lead, support and sustain a program where the next generation can encounter God's Word.

ANCIENT HISTORY

pre-
2018

Two ministries, Stand for Truth and Cross Over the Hill, shared a common goal: reaching public school students with the gospel. Their early efforts laid the groundwork for a new kind of solution to a Bible education during school hours.



STAND FOR TRUTH

THE RIDDLE



We faced a challenging riddle: If Bible education during school hours is legal and impactful, why is it so uncommon? The answer: Too many barriers to entry. The solution? A plug-and-play model any community can implement. Thus, LifeWise Academy was born.

2018

PROOF OF CONCEPT

Two schools piloted the LifeWise model with more than 60% of eligible students enrolled. The flagship LifeWise Academy in Van Wert, Ohio, had an enrollment rate of 95%. The model worked and a movement began.



2019

GOING VIRAL



Amidst a global pandemic, LifeWise launched in three additional schools and introduced its first shuttle bus. LifeWise grew to serve eight schools and set a goal to serve 25 schools by 2025.

2020

MULTIPLICATION

New programs launched in urban, suburban and rural contexts—including a program outside of Ohio. LifeWise grew to serve 36 schools with more than 5,600 students enrolled!



2021

THE CAMPAIGN

THE FIRST
1,000
SCHOOLS

A new goal was set to reach 1,000 schools by the 2026-27 school year. By God's grace, more than 15,000 students enrolled in LifeWise Bible classes from 133 schools across 4 states.

2022

DURING SCHOOL HOURS

LifeWise focused on clarifying and amplifying the opportunity for Bible education with the release of the book During School Hours. LifeWise programs served 30,000 students from 331 schools across 13 states.



2023

COAST TO COAST



LifeWise expanded from coast to coast with programs serving 585 schools in 27 states—from Los Angeles, CA to Hilton Head, SC and Lake County, FL to Seattle, WA.

2024

See More About
LifeWise History



lifewise.org/history

A PROVEN MODEL

The LifeWise plug-and-play model empowers communities in all contexts with the resources and tools to launch and maintain effective programs. Each LifeWise program operates with a standard set of policies and curriculum that is easily adapted to local needs. The LifeWise Support Center, based in Columbus, OH, assists with systems, resources, training and support to ensure the quality and sustainability of new and existing local programs.



See Julie's Story from
LifeWise Upper Arlington



📍 CASE STUDY: SUBURBAN

In February 2021, a group of parents came together to see if there was any interest in starting a LifeWise Academy in Upper Arlington, Ohio. A Steering Committee subsequently formed, and community interest grew. After meeting with school administration, approval was granted to start LifeWise Academy in Upper Arlington. **LifeWise Upper Arlington provides Bible education for students in grades K-12.**



"I can't wait to see what heaven's going to look like when we see the impact of a whole group of people coming together with the same mission of reaching the next generation with the gospel of Christ."

JULIE, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

📍 CASE STUDY: URBAN

Launching in 2023, the LifeWise program in Shelby County, Tennessee, is bringing Bible education to hundreds of public school students in the Memphis area during school hours. In a community where many families are two generations removed from Christ, LifeWise is providing students with the hope and truth of Scripture.



"Ever since I learned about LifeWise, I realized this ministry is not a job; this is the work of God we are doing in our city."

JAMES, REGIONAL PROGRAM DIRECTOR

See Video Highlights from
LifeWise Shelby County, TN



📍 CASE STUDY: RURAL

In the rural community of Sabetha, Kansas, volunteers walk with students from Sabetha Elementary School to "The LifeWise House" across the street. The program offers weekly Bible classes for students in grades 1-5. After two years of operating, LifeWise Sabetha serves nearly half of all enrolled students.

"I get to use my teaching skills to share with kids the most important truths they will ever need to hear."

MARIA, LIFEWISE TEACHER



See Video Highlights from
LifeWise Prairie Hills



"I've never had a Bible before! I'm going to read it every night!"

LifeWise Student

"My son comes home with Bible stories he's excited to talk about."

LifeWise Parent

"LifeWise is the best part of the day! I wish we could come every day!"

LifeWise Student

"To see students connecting the dots of who God is and how much He loves them is a privilege."

LifeWise Teacher

"Is this a church? I've never been inside a church."

LifeWise Student

"What we're seeing is lives being changed."

LifeWise Director



TRANSFORMING LIVES, ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

LifeWise is reaching more public school students every year with the life-changing truth of the gospel. As communities launch programs across the nation, lives are being transformed by God's Word. Together, we're making an eternal impact on the next generation.

See More of the
LifeWise Impact



lifewise.org/impact

THE 10 STEPS TO LAUNCH A LIFEWISE

INTEREST PHASE

1



Collect 50 Signatures
(1-4 weeks)

2



Watch a Kickoff Meeting
(1-3 weeks)

3



Start Fundraising
(0-2 weeks)

PLANNING PHASE

4



Form a Steering Committee
(0-3 weeks)

5



Draft a Plan
(2-4 weeks)

6



Obtain School Approval
(2-6 weeks)

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

7



Recruit Your Team
(0-6 weeks)

8



Train Your Team
(2-6 weeks)

9



Execute the Plan
(12+ weeks)

10

LAUNCH!



Inside our CURRICULUM

The LifeWise curriculum takes students on a journey through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation with an intentional focus on three areas:



HEAD

We focus first on simply knowing what the Bible says.



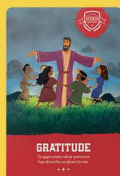
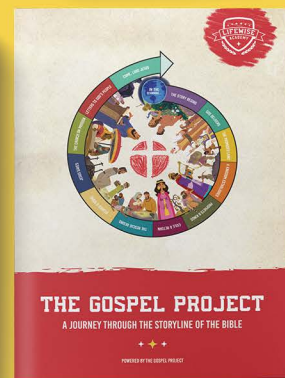
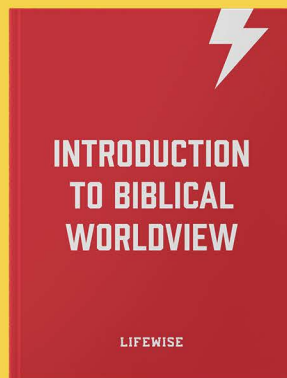
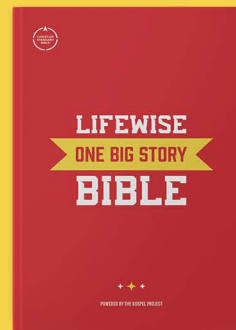
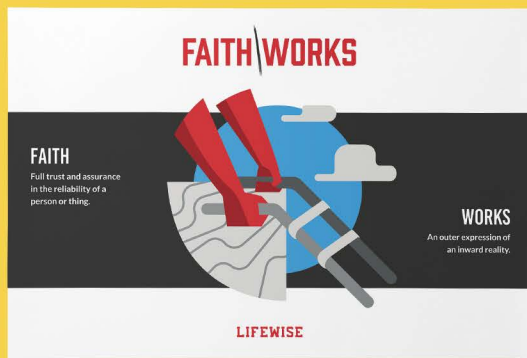
HEART

We examine how the Bible story points to the big picture of the gospel.



HANDS

We explore ways the gospel transforms our character.



See More About
our Curriculum



lifewise.org/curriculum

FAQ



Q: How does LifeWise compare with before- and after-school programs?

A: LifeWise complements existing programs but stands out by operating during the school day, reaching students who might not attend before- or after-school programs due to transportation or other conflicts.

Q: Does LifeWise interfere with classes during the school day?

A: No. LifeWise classes are scheduled in coordination with school officials and typically take place during lunch and recess, “specials” rotations or elective periods, ensuring they don’t conflict with mandatory courses or extracurriculars.

Q: How are LifeWise programs staffed?

A: A local Steering Committee first coordinates program details with school officials and then identifies a Program Director and advisory Board to lead the program long-term. The Director and Board recruit and hire qualified teachers with resources and coaching from the LifeWise Support Center. A number of volunteers are enlisted as well to assist with transporting students and helping in the classroom.

Q: How much does it cost to operate a local program?

A: The cost varies based on staff, facility, transportation and materials, typically ranging from \$300-\$400 per student per year, depending on local decisions.

Q: How are the donations raised to support the program?

A: The LifeWise Support Center provides training, strategies and materials to help local LifeWise leaders raise funds so there is no cost to schools or participating families.

Q: How do churches with differing beliefs and practices partner together to provide LifeWise to local students?

A: LifeWise unites churches around the core tenets of the Christian faith, particularly the gospel. A special effort is made to avoid teaching an official position on secondary issues.

Q: What are the options for LifeWise classroom facilities?

A: Students either walk under the supervision of volunteer chaperones or are driven by bus or van to the off-site LifeWise classroom. Most LifeWise classrooms are located in nearby churches, while others are housed in privately owned facilities.



*See More Questions About
LifeWise on our Website*



You can be
THE DIFFERENCE

Imagine every student in your state having the opportunity to learn the Word of God as part of their school day each week. LifeWise has a proven model and viable path to make it a reality. The primary obstacle in the way of that reality is the need for human and financial resources. Please consider a meaningful commitment to LifeWise in your state to help bring the gospel to students who need it. **Here are two ways to get involved:**

START A PROGRAM



lifewise.org/launch

SPONSOR A STUDENT



lifewise.org/student-sponsorship



Join the
MOVEMENT

Find your school to get started!



lifewise.org/interest