TAKING THE AMERICAS FOR JESUS



TAKING THE AMERICAS FOR JESUS

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PASSING ON THE FAITH

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CONTENTS

Introduction for Parents and Teachers xi

CHAPTER 1
North America 1

CHAPTER 2
South America 13

CHAPTER 3
Central America and the Caribbean 29

CHAPTER 4
The Americas Before Christ 47

CHAPTER 5
The Inca and Aztec Empires 63

CHAPTER 6
Native Peoples of North America 73

CHAPTER 7
Leif Erikson and the Vikings 83

CHAPTER 8
Christopher Columbus: Reaching the New World 93













CHAPTER 9
The Conquistadors 103

CHAPTER 10
The Reformation and the New World 115

CHAPTER 11
Fort Caroline: A Huguenot Colony 127

CHAPTER 12
William Bradford and the Pilgrims 139

CHAPTER 13
John Eliot: America's First Missionary 149

CHAPTER 14
Jens Haven and the Eskimos of Labrador 159

CHAPTER 15
The Great Awakening 167

CHAPTER 16
David Brainerd: Missionary to the Natives of New England 175

CHAPTER 17
Jonathan Edwards: A Love for God's Glory 183

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 18
Wars of the Tribes and Nations 191

CHAPTER 19
Revolutions in Latin America 203

CHAPTER 20
Samuel Kirkland: Peacemaker to the Indians 213

CHAPTER 21
Lemuel Haynes: Pastor in New England 221

CHAPTER 22
Asahel Nettleton: Preaching Christ to America 229

CHAPTER 23
Melinda Rankin: Twenty Years in Mexico 237

CHAPTER 24
Captain Allen Gardiner: Tierra del Fuego 247

CHAPTER 25
John Horden: Taking the Gospel to Hudson Bay 259

CHAPTER 26
Dr. Robert Kalley: The Wolf from Scotland 267













CHAPTER 27
Dwight L. Moody: American Evangelist 279

CHAPTER 28
Henry and Eliza Spalding: Among the Nez Perce 289

CHAPTER 29
W.B. Grubb: The Paraguayan Chaco 297

CHAPTER 30
A Light in the North: Clah Brings the Gospel to Alaska 307

CHAPTER 31
George Darley: Pastor to Prospectors and Gamblers 317

CHAPTER 32
Troubles and World Wars 327

CHAPTER 33
Communism and Socialism in Latin America 341

CHAPTER 34
Elisabeth Elliot: The Gospel for the Waorani 355

CHAPTER 35
Betty Greene: Flying for the Glory of God 363

INTRODUCTION FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Dear Parents and Teachers,

Thank you for choosing *Taking the Americas for Jesus* for your student's history studies. Before your student gets started, here is some introductory information so that you can make the best use of this course.

Taking the Americas for Jesus contains thirty-five chapters, retelling some of the most significant stories from Christian history in the Americas. Because this course is designed for third-grade readers, it is necessarily limited in its scope. We've selected some of our favorite stories, but many stories that could be told were not included. We hope this book will whet your appetite and your student's appetite for further studies in this area. History has laid up for us many more wonderful works of God on the American continents. You will find that later courses produced by Generations contain many of those stories.

Many of the chapters in this book are biographical in nature. We use biography to teach history for a few reasons. First, this biographical approach immerses the reader into a particular place and time with living color. The student gets to "see the sights" and "hear the sounds" by reading stories of real people. We also use biography because God accomplishes His purposes through faithful messengers. The gospel of Jesus Christ is spread throughout the world by His servants. In addition to biographical stories, we have included various chapters which provide broader historical coverage of certain periods of history in the Americas.

WHY THE TITLE?

In 2017, Generations published a high school textbook called *Taking the World for Jesus*. Within that book, author Kevin Swanson recorded the history of the spread of Christ's church from Jerusalem in the first century to the ends

of the earth. To be used alongside this work, we have prepared books that retell this history continent by continent for younger children by focusing on a single area of the world and delving into greater detail in the stories contained in each volume. These stories chronicle Jesus Christ's rule as it is recognized and acknowledged throughout the world. Scripture tells us that He is Ruler over all kings on earth (Revelation 1:5). The stories in this series of history books recount in a small way how Jesus' rule was both further established and recognized all over the world.

The title *Taking the Americas* is not intended to be a reference to colonialism. Of course, we are grateful that the Christian faith was spread around the world through European colonial efforts. But not every aspect of colonialism was righteous. Nor was every colonial effort a Christian effort. This book focuses on how the Christian message reached the Americas, not on how Spain or Britain took the Americas.

A LOOK AT THE CHAPTERS

The textbook begins with three introductory chapters focused on geography. In these chapters, the student will learn about North, South, and Central America and the Caribbean. This material is intended to orient the reader to the locations and sights they will encounter in the stories that follow. The fourth chapter briefly explores the question, "How did native Americans get to the Americas?" It details some of the archaeological remains that inform us about the civilizations located in the Americas before the arrival of Europeans. Chapters 5 and 6 add more information about those civilizations. Chapters 7–9 retell the stories of the first European explorers, including Leif Erikson, Christopher Columbus, and the Spanish conquistadors.

The remaining chapters bounce back and forth between stories covering North America and South America. You will find some of the most familiar stories of American history such as the *Mayflower* Pilgrims, David Brainerd, and George Whitefield. But we've also tried to include some lesser-known figures such as Jens Haven, the Dane who took the gospel to the Eskimos of Labrador; W.B. Grubb, the missionary to Paraguay; the Indian Clah who shared the gospel with his own people in Alaska, and more. We also introduce the

reader to some of the conflicts, wars, and politics of the Americas, presented through the lens of a biblical worldview.

In our retelling of the historical accounts, we have striven for historical accuracy. To engage the young reader, we have introduced dialogue into the stories. Some of this dialogue is taken directly from primary sources but simplified for younger readers. In some cases, fictional dialogue is supplied. These dialogue portions portray "what might have been said" based on what we know about the events.

In this book, the terms *native*, *native American*, and *Indian* are generally used interchangeably. We understand that *Indian* is not historically accurate as Columbus never did discover the *Indies*. But, since the time of Columbus' original error, the term *Indian* has stuck and is often used in historical writings past and present. The historical circumstances of how *Indian* became a designation for native Americans is explained to the student in the chapter on Christopher Columbus.

In order to make this course visually engaging, we have provided maps, historical artwork and photography, and some custom illustrations. Taking time to examine the maps will help the student gain a grasp of the geography of the area they are studying.

This course also contains Prayer Points. These are suggested topics to guide the reader into a time of prayer. We should give thanks and praise to God for His great works done in the past. And we should pray that God's kingdom would come and His will be done in the future. It is recommended that the parent/teacher and student take time to pray together after each chapter is read.

A workbook to accompany *Taking the Americas for Jesus* is also available. It contains a lesson schedule, written assignments, and enrichment projects to further reinforce the material introduced in this book.

We offer this resource to Christian families around the world with the prayer that Jesus Christ, our Great King and Savior, would be glorified in its use and in our humble efforts to record His marvelous works in history.

For Christ's Kingdom,
Joshua Schwisow
June 2026



Buffalo in Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming

1 NORTH AMERICA

O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth! (Psalm 8:9)

Welcome to the Americas! In this book, you will learn about what God has done in this part of the world. In the last 2,000 years, much has changed in the Americas. This book tells just a few stories about those changes. It is an exciting story. It is exciting because God is the Lord of history. Our God is sovereign, wise, and good.

Two thousand years ago, the Lord Jesus rose from the dead. He then went to heaven. Jesus rules over the world from God's right hand. The Bible says that Jesus is King over all things (Revelation 1:5). He has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18-20). This means that Jesus is ruling over the Americas. One day, every person on earth will bow to Jesus. They will confess that He is Lord (Philippians 2:10-11).

Right now, the good news of the gospel is spreading. God is saving people everywhere. All over the world, people are learning that Jesus is Savior and Lord.

For a long time, people in the Americas believed in false gods. But now, many people in the Americas follow Jesus. How did this happen? Why did these people change? This change occured because faithful men and women came to America. These men and women loved and served God. They told the people in this land the good news about Jesus. Then, many people in the Americas believed in God and began to love Him and serve Him.

Soon you will read stories about these people. But first, we'll learn a little

about **geography**. Geography is the study of land. It tells us about the mountains, rivers, forests, and oceans. It tells us if a land is hot or cold, wet or dry.

The Americas are made up of two **continents**. A continent is a large piece of land bordered by ocean. North America is one continent. South America is the other. In this chapter, we will learn about North America.

MAJOR COUNTRIES IN NORTH AMERICA



North America has three large countries in it. Those countries are the United States of America, Canada, and Mexico. Canada is in the north. Mexico is in the south. And the United States is in the middle. The United States has the largest population. About 340 million people live here. This country has fifty states in it. Forty-eight of these states are joined to each other. But two of the states don't touch the rest. These two states are far away from the others. Their names are Alaska and Hawaii. Alaska is next to Canada. Hawaii sits all by itself in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Most people in the United States speak English.

Canada is larger than the United States. But not as many people live here. Most of the people live near the border. This border divides the United States from Canada. Not many people live in the north parts of Canada. It's hard to live in the north because it gets very cold there in the winter. Canada is filled with beautiful mountains, rivers, trees, and animals. It is the second

largest country in the world. Only Russia is bigger than Canada. People in Canada speak English or French.

The southern country of North America is Mexico. Because it is so far south, Mexico has much warmer weather. It also has a larger population than Canada. In Mexico you can find some of the oldest buildings in the world. Long ago, the Aztecs and Maya built large cities here. You will learn more about these civilizations in later chapters. People in Mexico speak Spanish.

MAJOR COUNTRIES IN NORTH AMERICA

Country	Capital	Population
United States of America	Washington, DC	340 million
Mexico	Mexico City	132 million
Canada	Ottawa	40 million

Note: population totals for all charts are approximate.



Big Sur Bridge, California



Banff National Park, Alberta, Canada

MOUNTAINS

Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever You had formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. (Psalm 90:2)

Every part of God's creation reveals His glory. We see God's wisdom, power, and beauty by looking at the earth. What do you think of when you look at a mountain? You might think about how strong God must be to make such a big, tall object. North America has many **mountain ranges**. A mountain range is a group of mountains extending over a large area.

The tallest mountain in North America is in Alaska. It is called Mt. Denali. This mountain is 20,310 feet tall. Because it is in Alaska (in the far north) and because it is very tall, it can get extremely cold on top of the mountain. If you ever climb to the top, you will need a lot more than just a coat! Sometimes it can feel as cold as 100°F below zero (–73°C). Even during the summer, the top of the mountain will be freezing cold.

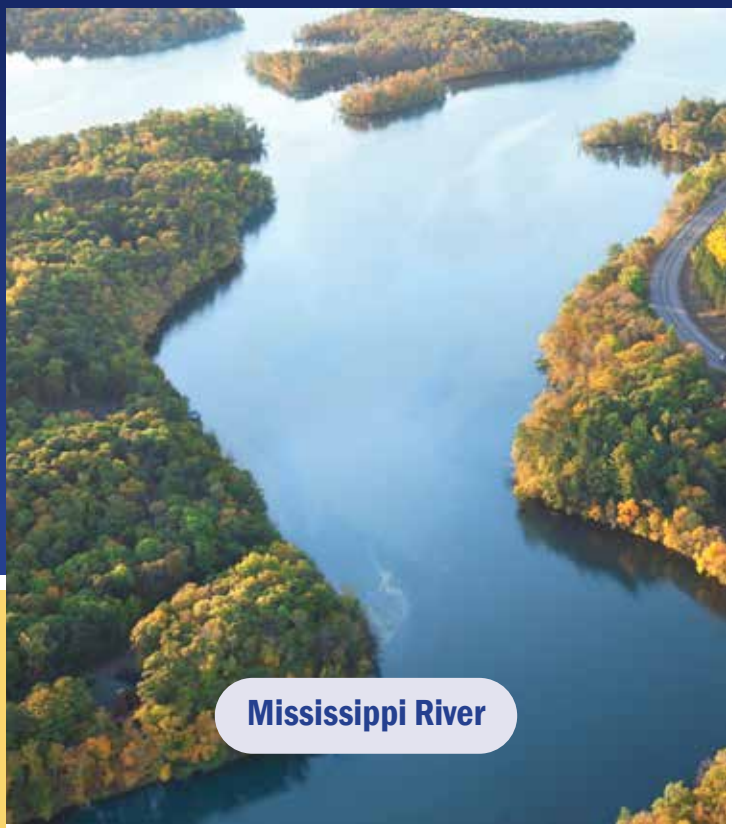

Mt. Denali, Alaska


Pico de Orizaba, Mexico

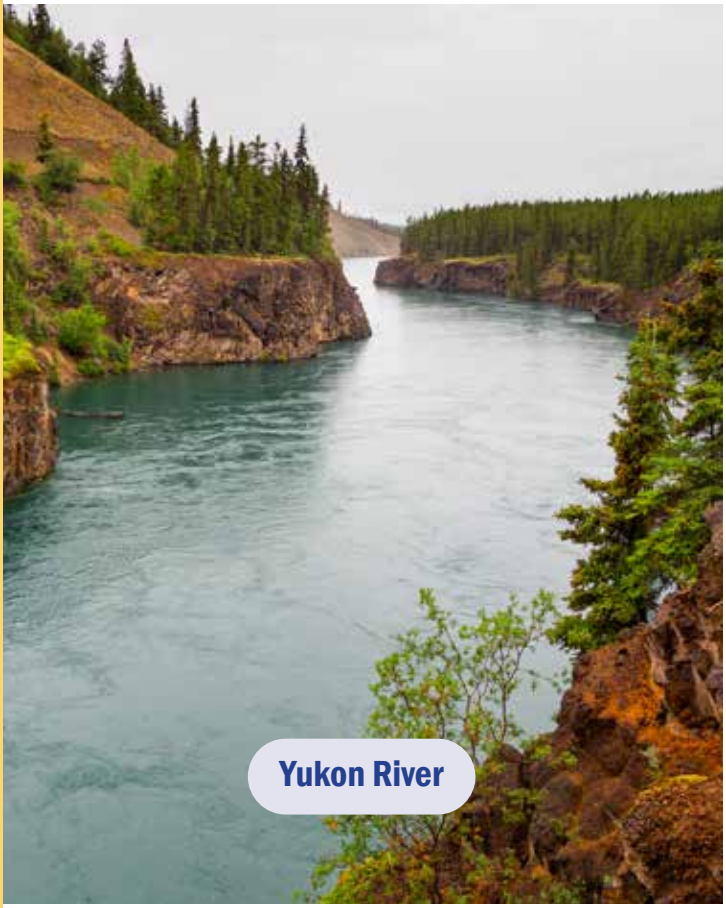
If we go down to Mexico, we will find another tall mountain. This one is called Pico de Orizaba. It is the tallest mountain in Mexico. It is 18,491 feet tall. Because this mountain is so far south, it is not as cold as Mt. Denali. But there is always snow at the top of this mountain. Even in summer, the snow never melts.

HIGHEST MOUNTAINS IN NORTH AMERICA

Mountain	Elevation	Location
Mt. Denali	20,310 feet	Alaska, USA
Mt. Logan	19,551 feet	Yukon, Canada
Pico de Orizaba	18,491 feet	Veracruz, Mexico



Mississippi River



Yukon River

RIVERS

The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness,
The world and those who dwell therein.
For He has founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the waters.
(Psalm 24:1-2)

Without water, no one would survive. We all need water to stay alive. People use water to drink, to cook, and to clean. They also use it to water their crops. Many cities are built near rivers. Often, people build cities near rivers because the water helps them survive. Because the Lord is gracious and kind, He gave America many rivers and lakes. This is a sign of His mercy to the people here.

One of the largest rivers in North America is the Mississippi River. Take a break from reading here. Try to spell Mississippi. Can you do it?

The Mississippi is over 2,000 miles long. Look at the map to find some big cities that were built beside this river. It is a very wide and long river. Because it is so long, it is very useful. For hundreds of years, people



have used this river for moving food and supplies from one place to another.

Another long river in North America is the Yukon. It flows through Canada. The waters of the Yukon extend all the way into the ocean. This river helps many people by bringing them lots of fish. The Yukon abounds with salmon. Because this river is so far north, it can get quite cold. There are many small towns along the river. In one of the towns, it might get as cold as –28°F (–33°C). That's quite frigid! In this part of Canada, there are often no roads to many of these towns. Because of this, people use the Yukon River as a kind of water road to bring in food and other things they need.

Much farther south, there is the mighty Rio Grande. How do you think this river got its name? The name is Spanish, and it means "Big River." Just like its name says, it is a very large river. It divides Texas from Mexico.



Grand Canyon, Arizona

MAJOR RIVERS IN NORTH AMERICA		
River	Length	Location
Missouri River	2,341 miles	USA
Mississippi River	2,320 miles	USA
Yukon River	1,980 miles	Alaska, Canada
Rio Grande	1,896 miles	USA, Mexico

BEAUTIFUL PLACES

O Lord, how manifold are Your works!
In wisdom You have made them all. (Psalm 104:24)

Everywhere we look in creation, we are surrounded by God's beauty and glory. North America has many beautiful and wondrous places. Perhaps you can visit some of them.

Would you like to see a stunning sunrise? You can see one if you ever go to Arizona. This is where you will find the Grand Canyon. The Grand Canyon is so massive and so spectacular that you might gasp when you see it. We call it a breathtaking sight. This is one of the most remarkable places in the world. The canyon is about 270 miles long. At points, it is eighteen miles wide. In this canyon, you will see many kinds of rock layers. The Grand Canyon exists because thousands of years ago, the global flood (Genesis 6-8) filled the earth, carving out the walls of the canyon.

Would you like to see some polar bears? Take a trip to the town of Churchill, Canada. It is difficult to get there. And you will need a very warm jacket and gloves. But if you visit Churchill, you can see polar bears up close,



Polar bears in Churchill, Manitoba, Canada

walking the streets of the town. This town is called the "polar bear capital of the world."

If Churchill is too cold for your liking, you could go south instead. Take an airplane down to Mexico. Instead of snow and ice, you will find tropical jungles. Instead of polar bears, you will find lots and lots of bugs. Here, in a place called Yucatán, you will find something very strange. This part of Mexico has a number of **cenotes** (pronounced "suh-NO-tees"). These are underground lakes or ponds. The sun shines through a hole in the ceiling onto the water below. There are over 6,000 cenotes in Yucatán.

Another thrilling sight is found on the border of Canada and the United States. There you will find Niagara Falls. Niagara Falls has three large waterfalls. Water drops over 150 feet into the river below. If you get too close to the falls, you won't be able to hear anything, because the waterfalls are extremely loud! The falling water makes a sound louder than thunder.

Now you've seen a little bit of the vast continent of North America. What should we do after seeing all these wonderful things? We should stop and praise God. This land shows us His great power and majesty. Can you see His power in these mighty mountains? Can you see His majesty in the beauty of His creation?

PRAYER POINTS: NORTH AMERICA

Take time now to pray a prayer of praise. Let us adore and worship our great God!

- **Praise God for His Power**
  We learn much about God by studying creation. We learn how powerful our God is when we see Niagara Falls. The Lord by His power made Mt. Denali to stand. The God who made all things is worthy of our praise.

- **Praise God for His Goodness**
  We live in a fallen world. All the world is damaged by the fall into sin. But God is still good to His creation. He continues to send us sunshine to give us warmth. He sends rain to the peoples of North America so they can eat. He gives them rivers for food and travel. Behold the goodness of God. Praise Him for this goodness!



Niagara Falls



Vinicunca, Cusco Region, Peru (called in English, “Rainbow Mountain”)