

ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN SIMPLIFIED ENGLISH

TEACHING GUIDE

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

WRITERS

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Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Teaching Guide

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

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These lessons use the New Life Version (NLV) of the Bible. You can read it online at www.biblegateway.com and at www.studylight.org. BibleGateway has a free app available for iPad, iPhone, Android phones, and Kindle Fire. If you prefer a hard copy of the NLV, go to barbourbooks.com (search for "New Life").

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

Introduction for Teachers

Welcome!

The purpose of this Teaching Guide is to provide teachers with a plan for teaching a quality Bible lesson while helping participants improve their English language skills. Use of this material is suggested for International Sunday School classes or any Bible study group taught at a Basic English level.

The Teaching Guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Prior Preparation, Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Extra Teaching Ideas are provided under those same headings. As the teacher, you may pick and choose from these helps to use along with the student's Study Guide to fit the lesson to your class members' abilities and needs.

Pray and prepare

Prayer is key to every teacher's preparation, as well as an integral part of every teaching experience. We include a time of prayer in every lesson plan, but you can rearrange the plan to place the prayer time at a segment that is most conducive to your class experience. Use your own judgment as to where it best fits into your teaching session.

Online Resources and Study Helps

At **Bible Stories for Use with ESL Students**, you will find free materials, including picture sequence pages for both Old and New Testaments. Go to: <http://pages.suddenlink.net/eslbiblestories/index.htm>. The picture pages cover all important Bible passages and are copyright-free, so you can make handouts and posters for your students.

EasyEnglish is a form of simple English developed by Wycliffe Associates (UK). Their website: www.easyenglish.info contains Bible commentaries, Bible translations, Bible studies, and other materials written in simple English. They are free for download and use.

At **BaptistWay Press**, you will find additional adult Bible study helps. Go to BaptistWayPress.org and click Teacher Helps > Teaching Resource Items. While these are not specifically coordinated to the Simplified English Teaching Guide, they do coordinate with the theme/Bible passage for each unit.

The **Baptist Standard** online edition provides additional commentary on current lessons at www.baptiststandard.com > Resources > Bible Study (or www.baptiststandard.com/resources/bible-study).

Which Bible translation is used with these lessons?

The Bible text printed in this curriculum uses the New Life Version (NLV), a translation (not a paraphrase) which uses only an 850-word vocabulary.

The NLV is accessed free online at: www.biblegateway.com and www.studylight.org, so it is easily available to your students via their tablet or phone in class.

Bible Gateway also has a free app available for iPad, iPhone, Android phones, and Kindle Fire.

To order a hard copy of the NLV, go to barbourbooks.com (search for "New Life").

Why use the New Life Version (NLV)?

The NLV Bible often uses simplified phrases to express terms generally familiar to anyone raised in a Christian environment. In the Teaching Guide, these terms will usually be expressed using the NLV terminology, followed by the more common term in parentheses; for example, "proud religious lawkeeper (Pharisee)" or "early preacher (prophet)." The teacher has the option of using the NLV term for new Christians or beginning students or the common term where it will be better understood and less cumbersome in teaching. Once a word or phrase has been introduced in the Word List or teaching procedures, the familiar expression may be used to help students add it to their vocabulary.

This unique translation is gender-correct (same as the King James Version). All pronouns referring to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are capitalized. Short sentences are used with the subject usually preceding the predicate. No contractions are used. Many paragraphs are preceded with captions which summarize the content. There are no footnotes. Most Old Testament quotations in the New Testament are followed by the reference. Most words are limited to one meaning, an important feature for new readers and people learning English as a second language.

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

Suggestions for Teaching

General Suggestions

1. Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
2. Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
3. Review the Word List before beginning the study. Provide Study Guide pages for class to keep vocabulary studies in their notebooks.
4. Prepare 9-12 core sentences which tell the most important part of the Bible focal text. Illustrate each sentence with stick figures and symbols in *picture sequence* form (see details below).
5. Prepare lesson outlines or written materials before class—make your own cling sheets by cutting apart white plastic garbage bags and writing on them with markers. The plastic bags will cling to the wall.

Bible Comments/Focal Text

1. Help students hear English and practice their pronunciation by modeling phrases and sentence. Allow the entire class to repeat. Be consistent with stress and intonation. Speak naturally.
2. Allow individual students to read a sentence or paragraph at a time. For further practice, ask students to tell sections from Bible comments in their own words.
3. When time allows, pairs may read the lesson again to each other.
4. Class may close books and listen as a native speaker reads the section again.
5. Discuss lesson using “Things to Think About.”

Memory Verse

1. Challenge class members to say the Memory Verse several times each day.
2. Provide blank paper for students to write Memory Verses.
3. Write phrases or individual words on separate pieces of paper. Give to students to place in order.
4. Write entire verse on board. Read in unison. Erase key words a few at a time. Recite until entire verse is erased and class can repeat by memory.
5. Make a symbol for each word or phrase of the verse.
6. Use the symbols as a reminder for saying the verse.

Picture Sequencing (Lipson Method)

This method is especially suited for teaching beginners. It consists of a series of pictures with accompanying sentences that tell a story. It may be used solely for oral production (using pictures alone) or for integrated skills (engaging students in reading and writing the story).

You may use real pictures, videotape, pictures that are professionally drawn, or stick figures.

Other benefits include the following:

1. Relaxed, low-anxiety atmosphere as students focus on the pictures and create their own sentences to tell the story

Focus on fluency, not just accuracy

Focus on a message or task rather than form or grammar

Minimal error-correction as students tell the story

2. Pictures (even stick figures) convey meaning in every language.
3. The same set of pictures can be used with more than one level of students by making the sentences easier or more difficult.
4. The use of pictures helps students learn the language in “chunks” rather than words in isolation.
5. The only item needed is a piece of chalk—or a marker, if using a cling sheet or overhead transparency.

Picture Sequence pages for both Old/New Testaments are available free at Bible Studies for Use with ESL Students: <http://pages.suddenlink.net/eslbiblestories/index.htm>. The picture pages cover all important Bible passages and are copyright-free, so you can make handouts and posters for your students.

Preparation

1. Put a story into sentences that are suitable for the level of your students. Try to tell the story with a maximum of ten sentences. For low beginners, choose the simplest and fewest words possible. Keep sentences in their most basic form, so students can combine sentences later.
2. Draw simple pictures or stick figures to illustrate key points in the story. These serve as prompts for the telling of the story. Other drawing tips:

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An “x” in a small square beside a picture enables you to cue for a negative as you tell the story.

Direct quotations may be indicated with a cartoon-type bubble.

Procedure

1. Introduce the story by following your prepared script of sentences (for consistency) and pointing to the pictures as you speak. This will give students the main idea and help them think in chunks of language (as in real-life language use).
2. Introduce the new words as you again reference the pictures. Use props and/or dramatization as needed to establish understanding. Work on individual sounds and word stress as students repeat new words.
3. Lead students in repetition of the story, one sentence at a time, working on sentence stress and intonation.
4. Lead the class in one more repetition of the story (going straight through and continuing to refer to the pictures throughout the story).
5. Ask the class to tell you the story as you cue the story sequence by pointing to the pictures. (You become “stage prompter” at this point.)
6. Then ask for a single volunteer to tell the story. (This may open the door for several more proficient students to use what they know.)
7. Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 students to give each person practice in telling the story. (Inevitably, the most eager student will go first, followed by another “semi”-eager student. By the time it is the least proficient student’s turn, he/she will have learned a lot by listening, will have observed a good model at least a couple of times, and will have bolstered courage for risk-taking.)
8. Follow with questions to review story (begin by naming the setting, the characters, etc.—easy questions).
9. Conclude with life application questions that require some thought and give students opportunity to express opinion, emotion, and their own ideas.

Lesson Expansion

If the setting and circumstances permit, use these ideas:

- Sequencing pictures (a set for each pair of students) while listening to you or to a taped voice tell the story
- Picture sequencing without hearing the story told
- Matching pictures and sentences

—Scrambled sentences to arrange in order (writing numbers or letters in front of sentences to show sequence; cutting up sentences and moving around to position correct order)

—Strip story (cutting up sentences, issuing one strip per student, asking students to arrange themselves in order, having them retell the story by contributing the portion on their paper strip)

—Cloze (supplying a written copy with every nth word blank; students work in pairs to fill in the missing words)

—Dictation (teacher or student telling the story while students write what they hear)

—Provide a copy of the sentences for each student. Ask that they read the story to a partner.

—Ask students to write the story in their own words.

Bible passage as content for reading

Procedure

1. Tell the parable or story using pictures. Use animation and simple sentences.
2. Ask questions about the main idea of the story.
3. Read story aloud while students follow along and underline unknown words. Go over the meaning of these words with the whole class.
4. Intermediate or advanced students: Have students read silently a second time to look for answers to two or three questions about details that you have written on the board. Ask students to discuss their answers with a partner. Then go over answers with the whole class.
5. Beginning or low-intermediate students: Read story again and ask students to repeat it with you line by line.
6. Invite the class to read the story with you in unison.
7. Ask pairs to read the story to each other.
8. Ask for volunteers to tell the story in their own words.
9. Make drawings large enough for the back row to see.
10. Select a list of new words in the story—unfamiliar words that the students would not likely be able to figure out from context (generally 8-10 new words per lesson).
11. List the new words in categories: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs. When listing verbs, you may write both simple present and past tense forms (e.g., eat/ate, walk/walked). Basic beginners would do well to tell the story in present tense, but high beginners could work in present tense, then retell the story in past tense.

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Checklist for Successful Classrooms*Right Kind of Input*

1. New language in every lesson
2. Input that is slightly above the students' current level of proficiency
3. Content relevant to the students' real-life needs and interests
4. Language learned in meaningful chunks, not words in isolation
5. Comprehensibility achieved by use of the following:
 - Realia or authentic materials
 - Simplified language (rephrasing, repeating, clear enunciation)
 - Demonstration and multiple examples rather than explanation
 - Lots of gestures and nonverbal language

Low Anxiety Environment

Students should not be afraid to make mistakes or take risks in language learning. The following factors contribute to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and build a sense of community:

- Personally greeting and bidding farewell to students
- Sincere and frequent affirmation
- Minimal error correction from the teacher
- Frequent reference to the culture(s) of the students
- Smiles and laughter that are commonplace
- Connecting with students through eye contact and positioning yourself on students' eye level
- Calling students by name

Checklist for Real-Life Interaction

1. Pace activities with a balance of noisy/quiet and still/active
2. Attention to different learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)
3. Variety in grouping (predominately pairs and small groups of three or five; using whole class in initial presentation and again for feedback and wrap-up at the end)
4. A focus on a task or message rather than form (grammar)
5. Provision for all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
6. Avoidance of questions for which answers are known
7. Use of information gap activity in which partners have different pieces of information and must ask

- each other questions in order to fill in their gaps of understanding
8. Other useful activities: surveys, interviews, role-play, problem-solving, and interactive games
 9. Review previous material.

Some suggestions based on material developed for the *EFL Training Manual—Beyond our Borders*.

Meet This Unit's Writers

Jennifer Carson wrote lessons 1-6. She and her husband, Mark, and their six children live in Saginaw, Texas. Jennifer is a graduate of Baylor University, a former English teacher, a freelance writer/editor, and a long-time writer for this series. She and her family are members at First Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas.

Amy Barker is a wife and homeschooling mother of three who lives on a farm near Moody, Texas. She is a graduate of University of Mary Hardin Baylor in Belton, Texas, and a member of First Baptist Church in Belton. When she's not reading, writing, teaching, or feeding animals, she bakes homemade bread, makes homemade soap, and knits.

Phyllis Merritt wrote lessons 9-10. She has taught ESL since 1970 in the U.S. and has taught English in China for many summers. She and her husband, Jack, are active members at Columbus Avenue Baptist Church in Waco, Texas.

Judy Hughes wrote lessons 11-13 and the Christmas Lesson. Judy has taught English to internationals in the U.S. and abroad for many years. She is a trainer of teachers and a trainer of trainers. She and her husband, a retired pastor, now live on a farm near Moody, Texas, where they serve ministers through their Shepherd's Rest Ministry.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

Lesson 1: Jesus Is God

Lesson Focus

To lead class members to understand that Jesus is God and was sent by the Father to show us what God is like.

Bible Text

John 1:1-18

Memory Verse

“The Word (Christ) was in the beginning. The Word was with God. The Word was God.” (John 1:1)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, locate pictures of famous religious leaders to share with the class.
- ◆ For Encourage Application #14, create the bookmarks.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life, bring a photo book from a trip you took out of the country.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study, locate the suggested slide show.

Connect with Life

1. Show class members a few pictures of famous religious leaders from history. Consider Gandhi, Buddha, Muhammed, and Confucius. Ask if any class members have experience with religions founded by these leaders.

Allow time for responses. Then say: *Many of these leader taught noble ideas. But none of them compare to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is God. In today’s lesson, we will discover things that show Jesus is God. And we will learn how to point others to this truth.*

2. Read or summarize the introduction from Lesson 1 in the Study Guide and lead the class to discuss Question #1 from Things to Think About.

Guide the Study

3. Say: *Beginnings are important. Today’s Bible text is the beginning of John’s Gospel. Let’s see how it begins.* Read aloud John 1:1-5 for the class.

4. Read or draw comments from the Study Guide section entitled “In the Beginning.” Point out that John referred to

Jesus Christ as “the Word.” Then reread John 1:1-5 for the class while substituting *Christ* in the appropriate places that refer to Jesus.

Christ was in the beginning. Christ was with God. Christ was God. Christ was with God in the beginning. Christ made all things. Nothing was made without Christ making it. Life began by Christ. The Light shines in the darkness. The darkness has never been able to put out the Light.
—John 1:1-5

5. Guide the class to consider Question #2 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

6. Ask a class member to read aloud John 1:6-9. Instruct class members to notice how many times the word *light* occurs in these verses. Comment on these verses by summarizing the Study Guide section entitled “John Told About Jesus.”

7. Lead the class to discuss Question #3 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

8. Ask another class member to read John 1:10-13. Draw comments on these verses from the Study Guide section entitled “Jesus Came Into the World.” Then ask class members to respond to Question #4 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

9. Read John 1:14-18 for the class. Ask class members to listen for words or phrases that describe Jesus in these verses. Then guide the class to list these on the marker board as shown in the chart.

John 1:14-18

- Human (v. 14)
- Lived among us (v. 14)
- Shining-greatness (v. 14)
- Much-loved Son (v. 14)
- Full of loving-favor and truth (v. 14)
- More important than John (v. 15)
- Lived before John (v. 15)
- Him Who has so much (v. 16)
- Beside the Father (v. 18)
- Has made God known to us (v. 18)

10. Draw comments on these verses from the Study Guide section entitled “Jesus Lived Among Us.” Then discuss Question #5 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

Encourage Application

11. Read or summarize the Study Guide section entitled “Things to Remember.”

12. Guide a discussion of Question #6 from Things to Think About. Be sensitive to any class members who might be ready to accept that Jesus is God.

13. Create bookmarks for each class member like the one at the bottom of the page and have class members place them in their Bibles to mark the Book of John. Remind class members of John 1:12. Then share with class members how they can become children of God using the approach outlined on the bookmark.

14. Lead the class in prayer helping any who wish to receive Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Pray for those who have received Jesus that they will be strong witnesses who point to the truth that Jesus is God.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Bring in a photo book showing pictures from a trip you took to another country. Share the photos with the class. Relate any funny stories or humorous misunderstandings that happened on your trip. Talk about the differences and barriers you encountered while visiting another country. Ask class members to share their stories, too. Then read the introduction from Lesson 1 in the Study Guide.

◆ Share a few famous first sentences from classic books. See if class members can identify any of them. Then say: *The first sentence of John's Gospel is one of the most famous sentences of all.*

Famous First Sentences

“Call me Ishmael.”

—*Moby Dick*, by Herman Melville

“Two households, both alike in dignity, / In fair Verona, where we lay our scene . . .”

—*Romeo and Juliet*, by William Shakespeare

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of time . . .”

— *A Tale of Two Cities*, by Charles Dickens

Guide the Study

◆ Make sure that class members understand that the Gospels are special books in the New Testament. Emphasize that these books specifically tell about the life of Christ. Use a chart like the one (in the following column) to help them learn about the four Gospels.

| Author | Traditional Date (approximate) | Audience | Length |
|---------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Matthew | A. D. 60-70 | Jews | 28 Chapters |
| Mark | A. D. 55-60 | Romans | 16 Chapters |
| Luke | A. D. 60-70 | Greeks | 24 Chapters |
| John | A. D. 90-100 | All people | 21 Chapters |

Encourage Application

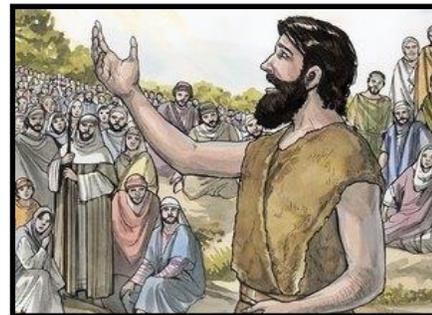
◆ When discussing John 1:1-5, share Genesis 1:1-4 with the class. Compare the two passages. Identify common words and ideas between these two passages and list them on the board. Emphasize the idea that Jesus was present at creation.

John 1:1-5 and Genesis 1:1-4

- Beginning
- God
- Made
- Dark
- Light

◆ Help class members to become familiar with John the Baptist. Refer to Luke 1 and Luke 3 and Matthew 3 to summarize events from his life. Consider using the slide show at the link below to present the story of John the Baptist's ministry (Matthew 3:1-12).

<http://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/gnpi-012-john-baptist/>



Becoming a Child of God

He gave the right and the power to become children of God to those who received Him. He gave this to those who put their trust in His name.
—John 1:12

- **A - Admit** that you have sinned and disobeyed God. **Ask Him** to forgive you.
- **B - Believe** that Jesus is God.
- **C - Commit** to following Jesus as your Savior and Lord.

Teaching Guide

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*The Gospel of John:
Grace and Truth*

Lesson 2: Jesus Shows God's Power and Presence

Lesson Focus

To lead class members to understand that Jesus pointed people to God's power and presence above religion

Bible Text

John 2:1-11, 13-17

Background Text

John 2

Memory Verse

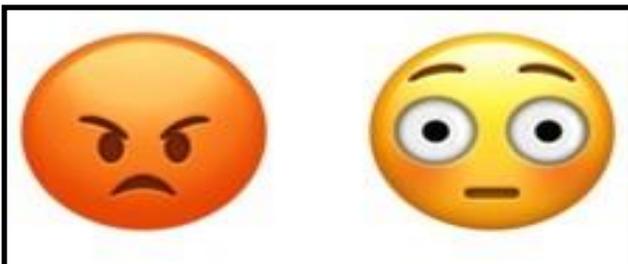
"Many people put their trust in Him when they saw the powerful works He did." (John 2:23b)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, locate emoticon images.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #4 and #6, recruit volunteers, prepare scripts, and gather needed props and costumes.
- ◆ For Encourage Application #10, prepare copies of the Word List Exercise.

Connect with Life

1. Use your phone or a poster to share two emoticons like the ones below. Allow the class to guess what feeling each one represents. Guide them to identify the two faces as *angry* and *embarrassed*. Write those words on the board.



ANGRY

EMBARRASSED

2. Invite class members to tell about a time when they felt one of these two emotions. Share a story of your own. Then say: *In today's lesson, we will read about a time when Jesus saved a family from an embarrassing situation. We will also read about a time when Jesus became angry because of people who were not honoring the house of God.*

Guide the Study

3. Read or summarize the introduction from today's lesson in the Study Guide. Ask class members to respond to Question #1 in Things to Think About from the Study Guide.

4. Ask three or four class members to help you act out John 2:1-11. Prepare and highlight copies of the Bible text as a script for them to follow. Select one member to play Jesus, one to play Mary, one to play the head man, two to act as servants, one to act as the groom. Serve as a narrator by reading the Bible verses for the class while having volunteers read only highlighted dialogue. Suggested props include pots or jars and cups. Costumes could be sheets and robes.

5. Comment on John 2:1-11 by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled "Jesus Showed God's Power." Then lead a discussion of Question #2 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

6. Next, invite a few class members to help you act out John 2:13-17. Prepare and highlight copies of the Bible text as a script for them to follow. Select one member to play Jesus, two members to play His followers, and one or two members to act as money changers. Serve as a narrator by reading the Bible verses for the class while having volunteers read only highlighted dialogue. Suggested props include a table, play money, stuffed animals to represent sheep, doves, etc., and a rope or whip. Costumes could be sheets and robes.

7. Comment on these verses by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled "Jesus Pointed to God's Presence." Guide class discussion of Question #3 from Things to Think About.

Encourage Application

8. Read or summarize the Study Guide section entitled "Things to Remember."

9. Allow time for class discussion of Question #4 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

10. Invite class members to work in groups in order to review today's Bible text and Word List (refer "Word List Exercise" box on next page for a teaching help).

11. Practice the memory verse by dividing the class into two groups. Write the memory verse on the board in two distinct phrases. Ask Group #1 to say the first half and

Word List Exercise:
John 2:1-11, 13-17

Jesus began His public ministry in John 2. He attended a wedding in Cana with His mother and some of His followers. When the groom's family ran out of wine, Jesus' mother knew they would be very _____. The Jews were like most ancient people. They valued _____. Running out of food or drink for their guests would bring shame on their family. Mary asked Jesus to help. The servants obeyed Jesus' commands. When they did this, Jesus showed God's power. He turned plain water into the finest wine! People were amazed and put their trust in Jesus.

Later, Jesus visited the house of God in Jerusalem. What He saw there made Him angry. The Jews had turned God's house into a marketplace to make money. The Jews were too _____ with these things to understand the problem with their actions. They did not show respect for God's house. They did not show respect for God's presence. Jesus made them all leave God's house. He reminded the Jews that God's presence was very special.

Answers: *embarrassed, hospitality, comfortable*

Group #2 to reply with the second half. Do this a few times. Have the groups switch parts and practice a few more times. Finish by saying the entire verse in unison.

John 2:23b

Group #1

Many people put their trust in Him

Group #2

When they saw the powerful works He did.

12. Close the class in prayer today by praying that all class members will have a renewed sense of God's power and presence.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ As class begins today, invite class members to think of as many religions as they can. List those on the board. Allow time for class members to share any experiences they have related to these religions. When they are done, write the name *JESUS* above the list on the marker board.

J E S U S

RELIGION

- Catholic
- Islam
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Mormon
- Jewish

Say: *Jesus is higher than religion. In today's lesson, we will learn how Jesus pointed people away from religion. We will see how He pointed people to God's power and presence.*

Guide the Study

◆ After reading John 2:1-11, call attention to the word *hospitality* from the word list. To help class members understand the importance Jews placed on hospitality, ask a class member to read Hebrews 13:2. Explain that this idea was common to both Greeks and Jews. You might also wish to summarize the account of Abraham in Genesis 18:1-16 when the Lord visited Abraham in the form of three men. Abraham's hospitality is described in detail in this passage.

Do not forget to be kind to strangers and let them stay in your home. Some people have had angels in their homes without knowing it.

—*Hebrews 13:2*

◆ After reading John 2:13-17, call attention to v. 17. Show class members that these words are used to describe Jesus in the Old Testament. Ask a class member to read Psalm 69:9 aloud for the class.

For the strong desire for Your house has burned me up.

—*Psalm 69:9a*

Encourage Application

◆ Use the following chart to help class members think about practical ways they can apply this lesson to their lives.

Ways to Apply This Lesson

- Consider the traditions of your religion and church that are most important to you. In a journal entry, write about how those traditions point you to Jesus.
- Visit a church from another denomination or faith. What elements of the worship service get your attention? How do they help you worship God? How do they keep you from worshipping God?
- Meet with a person from your church's hospitality or greeting team. Ask them about ways to serve in this ministry. Come back and share your report with the class next week.

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Lesson 3: Jesus Gives Life That Lasts Forever

Lesson Focus

To lead class members to understand that Jesus is God's Son, and He gives life that lasts forever by saving people from the punishment of sin.

Bible Text

John 3:1-17

Memory Verse

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son. Whoever puts his trust in God's Son will not be lost but will have life that lasts forever." (John 3:16)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, locate a picture of Tim Tebow.
- ◆ For Encourage Application #11, prepare copies of the case study.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study, locate the slideshow on the Internet.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Idea/Encourage Application, locate the video tutorial on the Internet. Also, if you like, bring a candle and match or a photo or video of trees in the wind.

Connect with Life

1. Show the class a photo of Tim Tebow like the one here. Read the information about him in the sketch below.



Photo credit: Lynne Sladkey/AP

Tim Tebow is a famous athlete. His parents were Baptist missionaries in the Philippines where he was born. He played college football at the University of Florida. As a Florida quarterback, he won two national championships. He later went on to play in the NFL. Throughout his football career, Tim was outspoken about his faith in Jesus. He often wrote Bible verses on the black paint he wore underneath his eyes. Once, he wrote John 3:16 on his eye black during a college championship game. When people saw this on TV, they searched the Internet to find out what the verse said. About 90 million people searched for John 3:16 on the Internet that day. The next year, college sports made a rule against any player writing a message on his eye black. It is known as the "Tebow rule."

2. Say: *Most people agree that John 3:16 is the most famous verse in the Bible. But not many know why Jesus said these words. Even fewer know to whom Jesus was speaking when He said them. In today's lesson, we will read this famous verse and discover the events surrounding Jesus' words.*

Guide the Study

3. Ask a class member to read John 3:1-2 aloud for the class. Instruct class members to listen for words and phrases that describe Nicodemus. Guide the class to list these on the marker board.

Who was Nicodemus?

- Proud religious law-keeper (v. 1)
- Leader of the Jews (v. 1)
- Came to Jesus at night (v. 2)

4. Comment on these verses by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled "A Man With Questions." Guide the class to discuss Question #1 from Things to Think About. Use the Study Guide

5. Ask another class member to read John 3:3-8 for the class. Instruct class members to listen to Jesus' words and imagine Jesus is talking to them. Then, ask class members what questions they would have for Jesus if He spoke these words to them. List their questions on the board. A list of possible responses is below.

Questions About John 3:3-8

- What does born again mean?
- What is the holy nation of God?
- How can you be born twice?
- How are you born of water?
- How are you born of the spirit?
- Why is Jesus talking about the wind?

6. Ask the class to consider Question #2 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

7. Read John 3:9-15 for the class. Comment on these verses by reading or summarizing the Study Guide section entitled "The Son of Man Must Be Lifted Up."

8. Guide the class to discuss Question #3 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

9. Ask a class member to read John 3:16-17. Then read the Study Guide section entitled “Jesus Came to Save.”

Encourage Application

10. Discuss Question #4 from Things to Think About.

11. Divide the class into groups and pass out a copy of the following case study to each group. Allow time for the groups to discuss, then call the class together for groups to share their responses.

Case Study

Li Jing is a college student from China attending school in the United States. She began attending an English club hosted by the campus Baptist Student Ministry. One day, she picked up a copy of the New Testament and started reading it. She is interested but does not understand what Jesus was saying to Nicodemus in John 3. How would you explain to Li Jing what it means to be born again?

12. Practice saying the memory verse and close the class in prayer asking that all class members will understand what it means to be born again. Pray also that class members will have opportunities this week to tell others how Jesus gives life that lasts forever.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Before class today, share the lesson introduction with a few class members who have a talent for art. Ask if these class members might be willing to draw a few illustrations for this story to share with the class today. As class begins, read the lesson introduction from the Study Guide and show the illustrations to the class.

Guide the Study

◆ To help class members better understand the words *born again*, read the following: *The Greek word for again is the same as the Greek word for above. So most Bibles note that this phrase could also be translated as born from above. This phrase helps us understand that Jesus is talking about a new life and a new heart that only come from God, who is above all things.*

Write the two phrases on the marker board.

BORN AGAIN
BORN FROM ABOVE

◆ In discussing John 3-8, help class members to understand the story of Moses and the bronze snake. Read or summarize Numbers 21:4-9. Consider sharing the slide show found at the link below.



<http://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/moses-serpent/>

Encourage Application

◆ When practicing the memory verse today, show the video found at the following link. This video contains a tutorial for learning how to use American Sign Language to communicate the message of John 3:16. Invite all class members to follow along with you in learning to sign along with the video.

<https://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=FEB9CFNU>

◆ To illustrate Jesus' words in John 3:8, light a candle or a long wooden match and direct the class' attention to the flame. As they watch, slowly blow out the flame. Wait for a moment, then ask: *Can you tell which direction I blew to put out the flame?* Explain that they can easily tell by seeing where the smoke goes, even if they cannot see the “wind” of your breath.

You can also show a photo or video of trees in a strong wind and ask how they can tell that the wind is blowing.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

Lesson 4: Surprised by Jesus

Lesson Focus

To lead class members to identify barriers to the gospel and cross them in order to share grace and truth with others.

Bible Text

John 4:7-15, 25-30

Focal Text

John 4:1-30

Memory Verse

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the Christ....’” (John 4:26)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, bring some type of map to class today.
- ◆ For Connect with Life #2, locate a picture of Billy Graham.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #3, locate a map of Samaria.
- ◆ For Encourage Application #12, prepare lyrics, hymnals or the video.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life, invite missionaries to speak with the class.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application, prepare copies of the case study.

Connect with Life

1. Bring an atlas, globe or other map to class today. Display in front of the class and help them identify different countries, states, counties, etc. Point out that boundaries are lines that divide one area from another.

2. Call attention to the word *boundaries* in the Word List for today’s lesson. Guide the class to understand that there

are many different kinds of boundaries. Say: *In looking at our map, we find physical boundaries that separate countries and states. But there are other kinds of boundaries. There are social boundaries, economic boundaries, and religious boundaries, too. A boundary is anything that divides. In the introduction to today’s lesson, we read about a man who struggled with racial boundaries.*

3. Show a picture of Billy Graham and read the introduction to today’s lesson from the Study Guide. Then guide the class to discuss Question #1 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

4. Say: *Billy Graham was following Jesus’ example by crossing boundaries. In today’s Bible text, we will read about the way Jesus crossed religious and social boundaries to help a woman have life that lasts forever.*

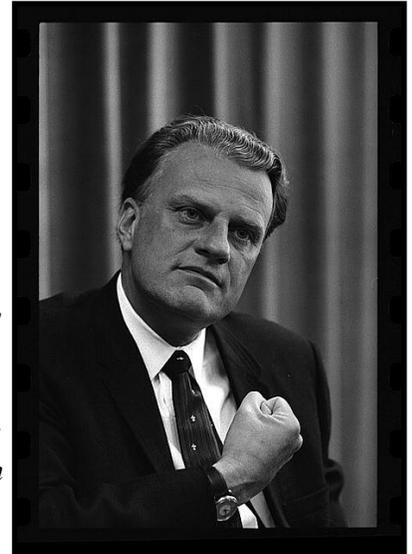


Photo from Library of Congress
<http://loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsc.03261>

Guide the Study

5. Ask a class member to read John 4:7-9. Then show a map of Samaria like the one here to help set the scene.



<http://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/jesus-samaritan-woman/>

6. Comment on the verses by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled “A Shocking Question.” Then guide the class to discuss Question #2 from Things to Think About.

7. Read John 4:10-15 for the class. Instruct class members to listen closely to discover how many times the word *water* is used. Comment on these verses by referring to the Study Guide section entitled “A Shocking Question.”

8. Ask the class to respond to Question #3 from Things to Think About.

9. Ask a class member to read John 4:25-30. Comment on these verses by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled “A Surprising Response.”

10. Discuss Question #4 from Things to Think About.

Encourage Application

11. Point back to the map you used at the beginning of class. Remind class members of the physical boundaries on the map. Then lead the class to name some kinds of boundaries Jesus crossed in today’s lesson.

Crossing Boundaries in John 4

- Religious boundaries (Jews/Samaritans)
- Gender boundaries (male/female)
- Physical boundaries (Judea/Samaria)
- Racial boundaries (Jews/non-Jews)

12. Read or summarize from the Study Guide section entitled “Things to Remember.”

13. Discuss Question #5 from Things to Think About.

14. Lead the class in singing the hymn “Wherever He Leads I’ll Go.” Pass out hymnals for the class to use or provide a copy of the lyrics. You might want to play a music video like the one found at the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wL0-BIKhjs>

15. Close class today by praying that every member will have courage and boldness to talk about Jesus with people across the street and across the world.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Invite a missionary or two from your church or community to talk about their experiences in crossing boundaries with the Gospel. Ask them to describe the location where they serve and any barriers they encounter in sharing Christ. When they are finished, say to the class: *There are many barriers that divide people. Some are physical. Some are cultural. Some are based on religion and gender. Our guests have crossed physical boundaries and language barriers to share the gospel with people. In today’s lesson, we will discover that Jesus crossed barriers like these, too.*

Guide the Study

◆ After discussing John 4:7-9, point out that the Samaritan woman came to the well alone. Say: *This was not normal behavior. Women usually went together in groups to draw water from the well. And they usually went in the morning because it was a cooler time of day. John 4:6 says that it was about noon when this woman came to the well. This was the hottest part of the day. These facts indicate that the Samaritan woman may have been an outcast, probably not welcome by other women in her community. In fact, she likely chose to come to the well at a time she knew she could avoid seeing other women. Maybe she was trying to avoid them because they looked down on her. Maybe other women did not treat her kindly. John later tells us that the woman had been married many times. This fact would help make sense of why the Samaritan woman might be an outcast in her community.*

Encourage Application

◆ Invite the class to work in pairs or trios to consider the following case study. After some time, call on each pair to share some of the thoughts from their discussion.

Case Study

Grace Baptist Church was once a thriving church. But the neighborhood around their church began to change. And the church began to struggle. The people who attended the church were quite different from the people living around them. They were different races and spoke different languages. Many of their neighbors were poor, while many in the church were rich. Members of the church realized they needed to change some things to meet the needs of their changing community. What are some practical steps you think this church might need to take to cross barriers and reach their neighbors with the Gospel?

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

Lesson 5: Healed by Jesus

Lesson Focus

To lead class members to understand Jesus' power over physical and spiritual matters such as sickness and sin.

Bible Text

5:1-15, 19-24

Focal Text

John 5

Memory Verse

"For sure I tell you, anyone who hears My Word and puts his trust in Him Who sent me has life that lasts forever."
(John 5:24a)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, bring a broken and an intact plate, or a set of pictures as described.
- ◆ For Encourage Application #12, prepare lyrics, hymnals, or the video.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life, purchase small prizes for the competition.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application, invite a speaker to share with the class.

Connect with Life

1. Bring a broken dinner plate to class today. Also, bring an intact plate. Place the plates on a table at the front of the class. As an alternative, use a set of pictures like the one shown here. As the lesson begins, call attention to the plates (or pictures) on display. Ask class members: *What is the difference between these two plates (pictures)?* Affirm that one is broken and the other is not. Point out that—just like plates—people can also become broken. Guide the

class to list different ways that people can be broken. List their responses on the marker board.

Ways to Be Broken

- Physical (sickness, etc.)
- Relational (marriage, etc.)
- Emotional (depression, etc.)
- Spiritual (sin, etc.)
- Financial (debt, etc.)



Say: People can be broken in many different ways. In today's Bible text, we will learn about a man with a sick and broken body. When this man met Jesus, his life changed. His story shows that Jesus has the power to heal broken things.

Guide the Study

2. Read or summarize the introduction to today's lesson from the Study Guide. Then lead the class to discuss Question #1 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

3. Read John 5:1-4 for the class. Take time to explain about the Pool of Bethesda. If possible, share a picture of the historic site like the one shown here.

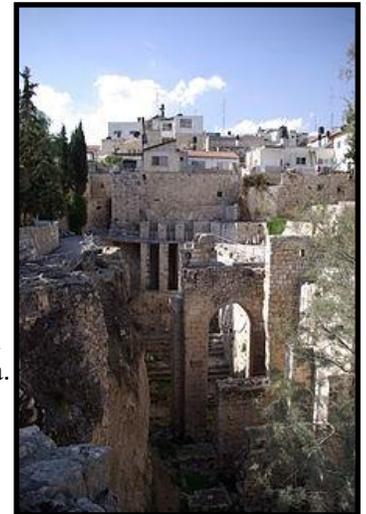


Photo credit: Berthold Werner
as found on https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pool_of_Bethesda

3. Read John 4:5-9 aloud for the class. Ask class members to listen for words and phrases that describe the man at the porches of Bethesda. List their responses on the board.

John 5:5-9

- Sick for 38 years (v. 5)
- Jesus saw him (v. 6)
- Was lying down (v. 6)
- Sick a long time (v. 6)
- Had no one to put him in the pool (v. 7)
- Was healed (v. 9)
- Picked up his bed and walked (v. 8)

4. Draw comments on these verses from the Study Guide section entitled “Jesus Has Power to Heal.” Then guide a discussion to Question #2 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

5. Ask a class member to read John 5:10-15. Comment on these verses by drawing on the Study Guide section entitled “Jesus Has Power Over Sin.” Ask the class to respond to Question #3 from Things to Think About from the Study Guide.

6. Read aloud John 5:19-24 for class members. Guide the class to identify words and phrase associated with the *Father* and the *Son*. Record observations on the marker board.

God the Father

- Loves the Son (v. 20)
- Shows the Son everything He does (v. 20)
- Shows Him greater works (v. 20)
- Raises the dead (v. 21)
- Does not say who is guilty (v. 22)

God the Son

- Can do nothing by Himself (v. 19)
- Does what the Father does (v. 19)
- Gives life to anyone He chooses (v. 21)
- Can say who is guilty (v. 22)

7. Help class members to understand the importance of what Jesus says in these verses. Draw comments from the Study Guide section entitled “Jesus Has Power Over the Law.” In these verses, emphasize that Jesus is God. Remind members that Jesus came to show us what God is like.

8. Discuss Question #4 from Things to Think About with class members.

Encourage Application

9. Share Mark 2:27 with class members to remind them of the truth Jesus is emphasizing in these verses.

Jesus said to them, “The Day of Rest was made for the good of man. Man was not made for the Day of Rest.

—Mark 2:27

10. Read or summarize the Study Guide section entitled “Things to Remember.” Guide the class to discuss Question #5 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

11. Remind class members of the illustrations used in the Connect With Life activity. Remind the class of the different kinds of brokenness people experience.

12. Close class by praying that every class member would believe and experience God’s power to heal through Jesus.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Start today’s lesson with a vocabulary preview using the terms from today’s Word List. Write the terms on the board. Divide the class into two teams. Act out each word from the list to see which team can name the correct term first. Award a small prize such as a candy bar or bookmark to each member of the winning team.

Encourage Application

♦ Invite a church member or staff member to share a short testimony as class closes today. Ask your guest to share about a particular way they experienced Jesus’ healing in response to brokenness in their lives.

♦ Use the following chart to help class members identify ways they can apply today’s lesson to their own lives.

Apply This Lesson

- Pray for someone who needs physical healing. Keep in touch and track their progress as you pray.
- Volunteer for a ministry that is helping those who need any kind of healing. Consider physical, emotional, relational, spiritual, and financial brokenness.
- Renew your commitment to a healthy observance of the Day of Rest.
- Reflect on ways in which you might be more concerned with religious laws than caring for people.
- Make a list of your biggest needs for healing. Share the list with a friend and meet weekly to share how God is working in these areas of your life.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

*The Gospel of John:
Grace and Truth*

Lesson 6: Jesus Says Hard Things

It Is Not Easy

Consider the following topics. Place a check mark next to the ones that are difficult for you to understand.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Modern Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Outer Space |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religion | <input type="checkbox"/> Car Engines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stock Market | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computers | <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Languages |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Politics | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Terms |

Lesson Focus

To lead class members to understand that the hard teachings of Jesus are valuable to His followers because they reveal Who He is.

Bible Text

6:51-71

Focal Text

John 6

Memory Verse

"You will look for Me and find Me, when you look for Me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, prepare the survey.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #3, locate the slide show.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study, locate the slide show.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application, locate and preview the video.

Connect with Life

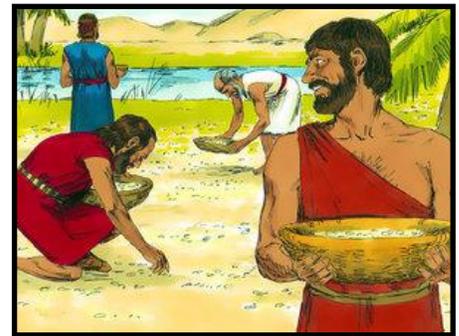
1. As class begins today, pass out copies of the survey entitled "It Is Not Easy." The one provided here is just a suggestion; feel free to customize for your class. After class members respond, allow time for class members to share and discuss. Point out the title of today's lesson. Then say: *In today's lesson, we will discuss the fact that Jesus said many things that are hard for His followers to understand.*

2. Read or summarize the introduction from today's lesson in the Study Guide. Then lead a discussion of Question #1 from Things to Think About.

Guide the Study

3. Read John 6:52-59 for class members. Comment on these verses by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled "Who Is Jesus?"

4. Remind class members of the way God sent bread from heaven to feed the Israelites after they left Egypt. Read or summarize Exodus 16. It might be helpful to use the free slide show available at the link listed below.



<http://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/moses-food-water/>

5. Guide the class to discuss Question #2 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

6. Ask two class members to read aloud John 6:60-62 and John 6:63-66 for the class. Read or draw comments from the Study Guide section entitled "Who Will Follow Jesus?"

7. Allow class members to respond to Question #3 in Things to Think About from the Study Guide. After some discussion, share the following: *Jesus knew that many of those who followed Him wanted salvation. They wanted all the good things God gives. But they did not truly want to accept the hard things that come with following Jesus. That is why Jesus said: "Some of you do not believe."*

Even today, many people want to go to heaven. They do not want to face punishment for their sins. But they do not want to accept all the hard things that come

with following Jesus. They do not want Jesus to be the boss of their life. They do not want to give up their sins. They want God to do things for them. But they do not want to change their lives. Jesus knew what was in the hearts of these people. He knew these people would not keep following Him if they did not understand or like His commands.

8. Ask a class member to read aloud John 6:67-71. Read or summarize the comments from the Study Guide section entitled “Jesus Knows His Followers.”

9. Ask class members to discuss Questions #4 and #5 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

Encourage Application

10. Read or summarize the Study Guide section entitled Things to Remember. Then guide the class in discussing Question #6 from Things to Think About.

11. Conclude the discussion by saying: *It is important to study and understand Jesus’ words. But we might not always completely understand Him. He is God. His ways are different from ours. His thoughts are different from ours. God does not require us to understand Him as much as He requires us to trust Him. He wants us to place our faith in Him and follow Him with our whole hearts. When we do this, He often gives us deeper understanding of things we do not know right now. This week’s memory verse is an excellent reminder of this truth.*

12. Guide the class to practice this week’s memory verse with a partner. Ask: *How do you think we can look for Jesus with all our heart?*

13. Share the chart entitled “Take Action to Follow Jesus” in order to encourage members in applying this week’s lesson to their own lives.

14. Close class today by praying that class members will understand who Jesus is and choose to follow Him with their whole hearts.

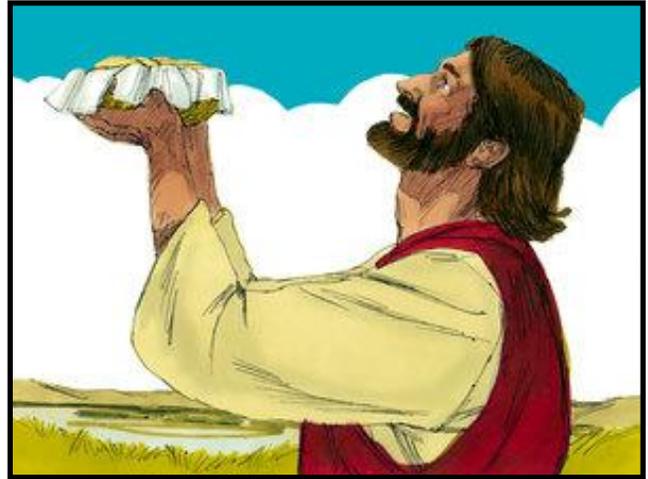
Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Invite the class to tell of any experiences they had with joining a team or starting a class when they were confused or surprised by some of the requirements. For example, many sports teams have rules for playing or for conduct outside of team practice that take some time to get used to. You can refer to the anatomy student in the lesson introduction as an example. After a few people have spoken, say: *It is often hard to begin or learn something new. For the people who followed Jesus, many of the ideas He taught were strange and difficult. In fact, some of what Jesus taught is still hard for people today.*

Guide the Study

♦ Give some background for today’s Bible text by reading or summarizing the events from John 6:1-14. Emphasize the fact that many people who were following Jesus were impressed by the physical miracles He did. But they were not prepared for the hard things Jesus would teach. You might want to use the free slide show located at the link below to help you tell how Jesus fed five thousand people. Note that this miracle is recorded in each of the four Gospel accounts.



<http://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/feeding-5000/>

Encourage Application

♦ Close class today by singing “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus.” The lyrics and story behind this hymn are showcased in a video found at the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALP9f4QVIoA>

Take Action to Follow Jesus

- Examine your weekly calendar and count how many hours you give to your relationship with Jesus compared to other activities.
- Establish an accountability partner who will meet with you weekly and ask you questions about your daily walk with Jesus.
- Make a commitment to spend some quiet time each day studying the Bible and praying.
- Volunteer to serve the church in a way that moves you out of your comfort zone.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

Lesson 7: Questions about God

Lesson Focus

To encourage class members to entrust their lives to God, remembering that He is creating a masterpiece with their lives.

Bible Text

John 9:1-7, 16-17, 24-25, 35-39

Memory Verse

“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” (Ephesians 2:10, New Living Translation)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, consider providing small, inexpensive notebooks for class members. They will have journaling opportunities in this lesson and the next.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life, locate copies of great artistic masterpieces to show in class (library books, images on a laptop, etc.).
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application, bring copies of Habakkuk 1:1-5 and Isaiah 55:8-9 in a simplified version to use in small groups.

Connect with Life

1. Begin class by posing a question for class members to ponder. Ask: *If you could ask God any of your deepest questions and have them answered, what would you ask Him?* Allow class members a few moments to write down their thoughts or think quietly to themselves. After they have had time to think and write, invite any volunteers to share their questions with the class. Do not try to provide answers to any questions raised. Instead, simply respond with comments such as: *What a good question! I would like to know that, too. I have wondered about that also. Etc.*

2. Read or summarize the lesson introduction from the Study Guide. Then discuss Question #1 of Things to Think About. Say: *In our lesson today, we will read about a time when Jesus’ followers asked Him a similar question. What*

Jesus then said and did can teach us a lot about why God allows us to go through pain.

Guide the Study

3. Before class, draw a chart on the marker board such as the one below, leaving the two lower rows blank.

| | About God | About Jesus |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| What Jesus’ Followers Thought | | |
| What Jesus Revealed | | |
| | | |
| | | |

4. Invite a volunteer to read aloud John 9:1. Ask: *Why do you think Jesus noticed the blind man? If you had been with Jesus that day, what might you have been thinking?*

5. Ask another volunteer to read aloud John 9:2. Ask: *What question did the followers of Jesus ask? Say: Let’s think about this question. It can tell us some things about what the followers were thinking.*

Ask: *What does their question tell us about what they thought about God?* Fill in the chart with responses.

Ask: *What does their question tell us about what they thought about Jesus?* Fill in the chart with responses.

6. Have one volunteer read aloud John 9:3-7. Ask another volunteer to read aloud the third paragraph in the Study Guide section entitled, “A Healed Man.” The paragraph begins with, “Jesus was not surprised...” Ask: *What do you think Jesus was thinking at this moment?*

7. Now turn to the row on the chart for What Jesus Revealed. Ask: *What did Jesus’ words and actions in this story show us about God?* Fill in responses.

8. Invite a reader to read aloud Luke 4:18 as quoted in the Study Guide. Explain that Jesus said this passage was about Him. Ask: *What kinds of things does this say the One sent from God would do?* (preach the Good News, heal hearts, set people free, make the blind see) Ask: *Did Jesus do these things? (Yes!)* Ask: *What did His words and actions show us about Himself?* Fill in responses.

9. Ask two volunteers to read aloud John 9:16-17, 24-25. Then read aloud or summarize the second and third paragraphs from the Study Guide section entitled, “A Truthful Man.”

10. Add a third row to the chart on the board for What the Keepers of the Law Thought. Ask: *How did the rule-keepers respond to the blind man being healed? What does this show us about how they thought of God?* Fill in chart

with responses. Ask: *What did they think of Jesus?* Fill in responses from class members.

11. Discuss question #3 of Things to Think About.

12. Ask one or two volunteers to read aloud John 9:35-39. Then read aloud the first paragraph from the Study Guide section entitled, “A Saved Man” for the class. Add a fourth row to the chart for What Jesus Revealed.

Ask: *Now what did Jesus actions teach about God?* Once again, fill in responses.

Ask: *What did His actions show about Himself?* Write in class members’ responses.

| | About God | About Jesus |
|--|--|---|
| What Jesus’ Followers Thought | God judges people for sin. God allows bad things in judgment of sin. | Jesus knows answers about God. |
| What Jesus Revealed | God can use bad things in our life for His plan. Sometimes God allows bad so He can use us in His plan. | Jesus had the power to heal. Jesus cared about individuals. |
| What the Keepers of the Law Thought | God values rules. God likes people who keep the rules. God doesn’t like people who don’t keep the rules. | Some thought maybe He did come from God. Most thought He was a sinner. |
| What Jesus Revealed | God cares about each person. The rules matter less than the person. | Faith is most important. Jesus is God’s Son! |

Encourage Application

13. Say: *The central question of our lesson today was why does God allow painful or difficult things to happen to us. Do you think we completely answered this question?* (No) Direct class members to look back at the questions they wrote down in the opening activity. Ask: *Do you still wonder about the questions you wrote down? Do you think you will ever know all the answers to all the questions we could ask about God?* (No.) *So what do we do with all our questions? Do we need to have answers to all our questions before we can trust God with our lives? Would you rather have no questions about God, like the rule-keepers in our story today, or have questions for God, like the followers of Jesus?* Lead the class in a final discussion about trusting God with our doubts and questions.

14. Read aloud the Memory Verse for the class. Discuss the definition of *masterpiece*. Discuss what it means to be created anew in Christ Jesus. Talk about what the verse says about God’s plans for us. Then have the class

recite the verse aloud several times, emphasizing the words *masterpiece*, *anew*, and *good*.

15. Close in prayer that we all might believe in God’s plan for our lives. Pray that we learn to trust that He can do much more than we might ask or think through His power working in us.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ As class begins, display pictures of famous works of art such as Leonardo’s *Mona Lisa* or Michelangelo’s *Pietà*. Ask questions to guide class members to observe the artwork. Ask:

- *What is your first impression of this piece?*
- *How does it make you feel?*
- *Do you find anything unusual or unexpected?*
- *Do you see anything delightful or beautiful?*
- *How long do you think it took the artist to produce this piece of art?*
- *What do you think that process looked like?*

As class members respond, guide them to the conclusion that creating great masterpieces is a lengthy, sometimes messy process. Note that great works of art reveal the talent and skill of the artist. But the beauty of the art isn’t fully realized until the project is completed and placed on display for all to see.

Then ask: *What would you say if I told you that your life is a masterpiece? The artist is God, and He is creating a beautiful work of art.*

Say: *Today’s lesson will give us a small picture of how the Artist works and how He is planning to bring beautiful things out of our lives.*

Encourage Application

◆ Divide the class into two groups. Assign one group to read Habakkuk 1:1-5. Assign another group to read Isaiah 55:8-9. Ask each group to read their assigned passage and then discuss what it tells about God’s plans and purposes. Allow groups time to read and discuss. Then ask them to report to the whole group.

Ask: *How does it make you feel to think that God is doing something surprising and wonderful in your life? Have you ever had something bad happen to you that God was able to turn to something good? How do you feel about that today?*

Ask: *What does it mean to you that God’s thoughts are not like our thoughts and His ways are not like our ways? How does that thought make you feel?*

Say: *God does not tell us every detail about His plan for each of our lives. But He does tell us some things about Himself that can help us to trust Him through the hard things. We can trust that He is doing something wonderful. And we can trust that His plans and ways are better than ours.*

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

Lesson 8: Choices about Jesus

Lesson Focus

To encourage class members to consider the choices they are making in life and to urge them to make the choice to follow Jesus wholeheartedly.

Bible Text

John 12:23-28, 35-37, 42-50

Memory Verse

"While you have the Light, put your trust in the Light. Then you will be the sons of the Light." (John 12:36a)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, class members will have a journaling opportunity. If you didn't do so in the previous lesson, consider providing small, inexpensive notebooks for class members. Or provide paper on which to write.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life, locate a light pad or light source that can be used for tracing. Also collect a spotlight or flashlight, a lamp, and a coloring page to bring to class. Consider using a coloring page of the life cycle of a plant such as the one found here:

<https://homeschoolclipart.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/PlantLifeCycleColoring.pdf>

- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application, bring a small planter, potting soil, and a seed packet for each class member. Herb seeds such as basil, chives, dill, or mint should work well.

Connect with Life

1. Prior to the beginning of class, write the following journal prompt on the marker board: *What is the hardest choice you have ever had to make?*

As class members arrive, ask them to pull out the notebook or journal they used in the previous lesson. Encourage them to read the journaling prompt and write out their response.

2. As class members are writing in their journals, begin

writing choices on the board. Write significant choices as well as insignificant ones, such as the following: Coke or Pepsi, family or friends, meat or potatoes, work or play, college or job, save or spend, nap or exercise.

3. When class members have finished journaling, go through your list of choices on the board, asking members to give the choice they would make. If time allows, also allow class members to share their reasons for their choices. Then ask the class as a whole to rank the choices given in order of importance. For example, which is a more important choice, *what drink you choose, or how you choose to spend your time?*

Say: Today we will be talking about choices. We all make many choices every day. Some choices do not have a great effect on your life as you make them. But other choices can completely change the direction of your life. How do you make the right choice in those big decisions? Today we will see what Jesus taught about making choices.

Guide the Study

4. Explain the context of this lesson's Bible passage. Jesus had traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. As He entered Jerusalem, a crowd had gathered around Him and worshipped Him. The religious leaders had been angered by this demonstration, and they had begun to make plans to have Jesus killed.

5. Ask a volunteer to read aloud John 12:23. Ask: *What do you think Jesus was saying here?* Guide the conversation to the conclusion that Jesus knew that He was going to die and that it was coming soon.

6. Invite another volunteer to read aloud John 12:24. Ask for any class members with gardening experience to describe the life cycle of plants. Ask: *How can many seeds come from only one? How does this word picture relate to Jesus and His death?*

7. Ask another volunteer to read aloud John 12:25-26. Help students understand the way we should interpret accurately Jesus' meaning of "loves his life" and "hates his life." It isn't the same as contentment or lack of contentment. Ask: *Do you think Jesus really wants you to hate your life (as we think of it in this culture)?*

Write the following on the marker board: *A Selfish Person* and *A Selfless Person*. Ask: *How are these two people the same? How are they different?* As class members respond, write their comments on the board under the words in a chart such as the one below.

| A Selfish Person | BOTH | A Selfless Person |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Puts self above others | Make choices | Puts others above self |
| Loves own life | Actions affect others | "Hates" own life |

Ask questions such as the following:

- *How can you tell if a person is selfish or selfless? Is it*

always easy to tell?

- *Are there any benefits to being selfish?*
- *Are there any benefits to being selfless?*
- *Is it possible to be both? Is it possible to be neither?*
- *How do you know which one you might be?*

8. Lead the class in a discussion of Things to Think About questions #2 and #3.

9. Ask a volunteer to read John 12:27. Ask: *What did Jesus say about how He was feeling?* (troubled, fearful, dreading the pain to come)

What does this show us about Him? Guide the class in a discussion to recognize that Jesus was a man who knew fear and pain, just like us. He was tempted, just like us. Yet He chose to sacrifice Himself for us. He was selfless.

10. Ask another volunteer to read John 12:28. Say: *Jesus had just said that God will honor those who are willing to give up their lives for God. Then ask: Did Jesus live what He taught? How? Why do you think God spoke in response to Jesus?*

11. Enlist a strong reader to read aloud the third paragraph under the Study Guide section entitled, “A Matter of Honor” which begins, “Of course, Jesus knew the purpose . . .” Continue the discussion of Jesus’ resolve to honor God and God’s honoring Him in return.

12. Ask a volunteer to read John 12:35-37. Ask: *Do you agree that Jesus was different from any other person who has ever lived? In what ways was He different?*

13. Have a good reader read aloud the second paragraph in the Study Guide section entitled, “A Matter of Trust” which begins, “Jesus had a purpose for being different.”

14. Guide the class in a discussion of question #4 in Things to Think About.

15. Ask one or two volunteers to read aloud John 12:42-50. Say: *Jesus left us only two choices. We can believe and accept that He was who He said He was. Or we can reject Him. There are no other options. And He said that the choice we make about Him is really a choice about God because He came from God.*

Encourage Application

16. Lead the class in a discussion of question #5 from Things to Think About. Then ask: *Why do you think so many people find this a difficult decision to make? What choice have you made about Jesus?*

Ask class members to look back at what they wrote in the opening activity in their journal. Ask: *How does the choice to accept or reject Jesus compare to the decision you wrote about? Which has more lasting effect on your life?*

Gently guide the discussion toward encouraging any class members who have not make a commitment to Jesus to consider doing so. Offer to meet privately with any

members who might wish to discuss this further.

17. Close in prayer, thanking God for sending Jesus to sacrifice Himself for us. Pray that any who are uncertain about Jesus would find the answers they need and make the choice to follow Him.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Set up a lamp, a light pad, and a spotlight in a dark corner of the room or darken the room. Set out a copy of the coloring sheet. Invite one volunteer to color a section of the page using only the spotlight or flashlight shining on the front of the paper. After a few minutes, invite a second volunteer to color a section using only the light pad shining a light behind the paper. Again, allow time for the volunteer to color. Now ask a third volunteer to color a section of the page using only the lamp to shine light around the page.

Say: *Jesus said He was the Light of the World. Let’s explore what He might have meant by that. Lead the class in a discussion of the following questions:*

- *In what ways is Jesus like a spotlight shining light onto our world?*
- *In what ways is Jesus like a light pad?*
- *In what ways is Jesus like a lamp?*
- *Each one of these light sources is used for a different task. If you need to repair something, a light pad may not be much help. But if you need to trace something, a flashlight will not be very useful. Which of these light sources do you think is most like the light Jesus gives? Why?*
- *Jesus said anyone who trusts in Him will become a child of the light. What do you think this means?*

Encourage Application

◆ Provide each class member with a small pot, a small bag of potting soil, and a packet of seeds. Invite class members to consider areas of their lives where they might need to make some changes or sacrifices. To what might they need to “die” in order to reap a harvest? Allow any volunteers to share their thoughts.

Then invite class members to commit themselves to making this change and “sow their seed.” Class members may choose to set up their pot in class and share their commitment with all. Or they may choose to take their pots home and do it privately. Encourage class members to plant their seeds and set their pot in a sunny window and tend it. The plant that grows from it can be a reminder to them of the benefits to be gained from sacrificial living.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

John
Loving-Favor and Truth

Lesson 9: Do as Jesus Did

Lesson Focus

Jesus showed how much He loved us by serving us.

Bible Text

John 13:1-17

Memory Verse

"I have done this to show you what should be done. You should do as I have done to you." (John 13:15)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Guide the Study #3, and #8, make study topic outline poster and prepare a display using an empty picture frame, sandals, a towel, bowl of water, and do an internet search for a picture of Jesus washing the feet of His followers.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #8, secure paper towels, hand towels, or washcloths.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #9, prepare "Jesus Taught" poster.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #10, make "We Remember" poster.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application, prepare items needed for washing feet: water, bucket, wash cloths or sponge, towel.
- ◆ Copy and enlarge the memory verse bookmarks for class.

Connect with Life

1. Ask: *If you only had 24 hours to live, what would you do? Explain: This lesson tells us some things Jesus did during His last 24 hours on earth. One thing He did was to have dinner with His followers to teach them, and show them what it means to serve others.*
2. Discuss: *When you have someone come to eat dinner, what do you do to prepare for your guests? What special things do you do during the meal to make your guests feel welcome and comfortable in your home?*

Guide the Study

3. Point out study topic outline - "Do as Jesus Did" (on

markerboard or poster) and show the display items.

Do as Jesus Did

Love One Another

Serve One Another

Jesus Knew His Work - John 13:1-3

Jesus Showed What to Do - John 13:4-11

Jesus Taught What to Do - John 13:12-17

4. Ask a volunteer to read John 11:1-3. Ask: *What did Jesus know that His followers needed to know?* (Jesus knew Who He was, where He was returning, and what He was supposed to do.) Point out how the words in verses 1 and 3 are alike. (Verse 1: "Jesus knew the time had come for Him to leave this world and go to the Father." Verse 3: "He knew He had come from God and was going back to God.")

5. List on the markerboard two things these verses tell us that Jesus knew about the near future.

His hour was near.

The Father had given Him all power.

6. Ask: *Who did Jesus say He loved in verse 1? How long would He love them?* Allow time for discussion.

7. Say: *The meal to remember when the Jews left Egypt was Jesus' last time to be alone with His followers.*

Explain that verse 2 shows that Jesus also knew Judas would betray Him.

8. Discuss: *What was your worst job? What is/was your best? What job would you never want to have?* (Example: cleaning sewers) Point out the bowl of water on the display table. Hand out towels to each member. Say: *Jesus was teaching how to serve by example.* Hold up the picture frame and the picture of Jesus washing His followers' feet. Say: *He gave them a picture of what to do.*

9. Display the "Jesus Taught" poster. Say: *Jesus knew how to teach so His followers would remember.*

Jesus Taught

1. He Told What To Do
2. He Showed What to Do
3. He Reminded What to Do

10. Discuss the "We Remember" poster using the information about how we best remember. Ask members to explain how Jesus used these methods as He taught.

WE REMEMBER

10% of what we read. 

20% of what we hear. 

30% of what we see.

50% of what we see and hear. 

70% of what we say. 

90% of what we say and do. 

100% of all fun and play. 

11. Call on volunteers to read John 13:4-5. Ask: *What do you know about washing feet?* Allow time for discussion. Discuss the need for washing feet in the time Jesus lived. Say: *The lowest servant usually had this job.* Ask: *How did Jesus show His love to His followers?*

12. Discuss: *Why did Jesus wash the feet of His followers?* Ask: *How would you have felt if you had been there that night and Jesus had washed your feet? How would you have felt if you had to wash Judas' feet when you knew he would betray you? Or Peter's feet when you knew he would deny you? Or, Thomas' feet when you knew later he would doubt you?*

13. Explain what Jesus meant in verse 8. (Jesus was giving a picture of service and also the deeper meaning of cleaning our souls.)

14. Discuss: *Has anyone ever served you the way Jesus served His followers? Is there anyone you can think of who needs to be served?*

15. Divide the class into three groups to read John 13:6-11. (Narrator, Jesus, and Peter) Say: *There are two kinds of pride: When you are not willing to serve another and when you are unwilling to be served by another.* Discuss how Peter felt when Jesus wanted to wash his feet.

16. Ask volunteers to read John 13:12-17. Ask: *What do the words "Lord and Teacher" mean?* Explain that the One Who was Lord of the followers was teaching them the truths of God. It is our job to follow Jesus' example by willingly doing lowly and humble acts of service for others.

Encourage Application

17. Ask volunteers or groups of volunteers to stand and do a silent drama of an act of service (Mime or Charade). Demonstrate an act of service first such as holding the door open for someone. Say: *Jesus showed us how to be a servant. If we want to be like Him, we need to serve others.* Ask: *What did Jesus say would make His followers happy?*

18. End in prayer asking that we will look for ways to serve others in the coming week (hold door open, let someone go in front of you at the grocery store line).

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- ◆ Ask class to name words or phrases about serving and service. List on board: Service stations, self-serve ice cream, "May I serve you?" etc.
 - ◆ Read the following list describing one who serves. Ask for thumbs up (agree), or thumbs down (disagree).
1. More interested in hearing others' stories than in telling

one's own.

2. Takes more joy in letting others get praise than in getting praise.
3. Lives to please God, not others.
4. Motivated by the mission, not by personal recognition.
5. Doesn't demand to be served in return.
6. Will serve even if no one else will.
7. Will serve anyone who has needs, not just friends.

Encourage Application

◆ Hand out paper towels, actual towels or hand towels to each person. Direct those present to look at the towel. Ask: *Would you let Jesus wash your feet?* Say: *He died for you.*

◆ Describe how Jesus' washing of the followers' feet was service that was: helpful, lowly, unexpected, voluntary, full of love, done for those who did not deserve it, met a need no one else was willing to do, does not give glory, is everyday.

◆ Wash feet. The teacher may wash the feet of one volunteer. Or, any of those present who wish, may wash another's feet. Say: *The act of washing other people's feet is an act of humility. There is nothing "magic" about washing another's feet. It is a picture that stays in the minds of what serving others means.* Hold up empty picture frame.

◆ Use the Chant. Ask members to repeat and do the motions after you:

One evening Jesus taught a memorable lesson.

(Nod head up and down to say "Yes.")

He did a job no King would do.

(Point finger back and forth and shake head "No.")

Jesus washed His followers feet.

(Move hand in washing motion.)

The dirt was gone. *(Stomp feet.)*

The King was serving. *(Place hands palms up.)*

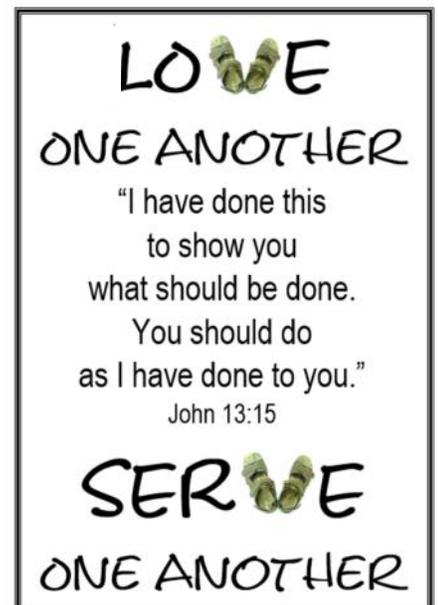
Jesus told them, "Do what I do." *(Point to self.)*

To show to others the love I've shown to you."

(Reach out hands to one another.)

◆ Read and discuss "Things to Think About" in the Study Guide.

◆ Hand out the memory verse bookmark. Ask class to read the verse aloud.



Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

John
Loving-Favor and Truth

Lesson 10: Jesus Sends The Holy Spirit

Lesson Focus

Jesus promised His Followers that God would send the Holy Spirit to teach and comfort.

Bible Text

John 14:15-31

Memory Verse

"The Helper is the Holy Spirit. The Father will send Him in My place. He will teach you everything and help you remember everything I have told you." (John 14:26)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make a PowerPoint with all verses, pictures and posters.
- ◆ For Connect with Life #4, prepare songs "No, Never Alone" or "Holy, Holy, Holy" and ask someone to sing "Because He Lives" for Guide the Study #12.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #5, prepare a Study Outline Poster.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #7 and Extra Encourage Application, copy Trinity symbols shown on next page.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #10, make poster and sentence strips for Jesus Promised to Send a Helper.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #16, prepare poster of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas, bring a gift box marked with the word "Helper" on the outside.
- ◆ For study of Bible verses, provide colored pens or markers.

Connect with Life

1. Ask: *What are some things you have tried to learn by yourself and were not able to?* (Examples: knitting, algebra, English as a Second Language, etc.) Point out how much easier it is to learn with a teacher, a helper.

2. Read the following statements and ask class to list who to call for help in the following situations:

Argument with a friend _____

Loss of job _____
Family member in an accident _____
Need for new apartment _____

3. Say: *This lesson tells about a time when Jesus taught His followers that He would be sending a Helper they could call on at any time.*

4. Sing "No, Never Alone," or "Holy, Holy, Holy."

Guide the Study

5. Point out Study Outline Poster below. Refer to it during the study:

Jesus Sends the Holy Spirit

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Jesus Promised to Send the Helper | (John 14:15-20) |
| Jesus and the Father are One | (John 14:21-24) |
| Jesus' Last Words | (John 14:25-31) |

6. Ask a volunteer to read John 14:15. Say: *Jesus told His followers again of His love for them and their love for Him. Ask: How do you know if you love Jesus?* (True love is shown when we are willing to obey.)

7. Ask a volunteer to read John 14:16-18. Prepare to discuss the meaning of the Trinity. Use the word list from the Study Guide and the following list as well as the symbols on the last page of the Teaching Guide.

- ♣ God is *three* persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- ♣ Each person is *fully* God.
- ♣ There is *one* God.

8. Describe how Jesus promised He would give them a Helper who would be with them forever. Discuss reasons that non-believers (the world) cannot receive or see the Helper.

9. Ask: *What did Jesus request the Father do for His followers? What can the Holy Spirit do for us?* (Using their own words, class can include the following: The Holy Spirit will help us, stay with us forever, and teach us to know what is true.)

10. Begin a poster using the following names and definitions for the Holy Spirit. Hand out large strips of paper with the names and definitions to class members. Direct them to add their sentence strips to the poster as verses are read and discussed.

Jesus Promised to Send a Helper

The Holy Spirit:

Comforts - Stands alongside to help or give strength
Advises - Speaks for
Spirit of Truth - Guides into truth, teaches about sin
Teaches - Teaches us all we need to know and reminds us of what Jesus taught

11. Say: *The Helper would be in them as well as with them. This came in Acts 2:1-4.* Direct class to circle the words *with* and *in* in verse 17. Instruct them to underline the word *forever* in verse 16.

12. Ask: *When have you felt the most lonely?* Teach the word “orphan.” Say: *Jesus wanted them to know He would always be with them in the person of the Holy Spirit. They would never be alone.*

13. Ask a volunteer to read John 14:19-20. Ask someone to sing, “Because He Lives.”

14. Ask a volunteer to read John 14: 21-24. Discuss what Jesus said about love.

15. Ask a volunteer to read John 14:25-31. Say: *Jesus gave His peace in time of trouble. He wanted His followers to know that God could bring them peace because nothing could separate them from the Father. Jesus showed His love for the Father when He obeyed and went to the cross.*

16. Point out what was happy and what was sad about Jesus going away (verse 28). Make a copy of this picture to show what good thing would happen when Jesus returned to heaven and left us the Holy Spirit with His followers. Say: *Jesus could only be in one place at one time. The Holy Spirit is in all places at all times.*



17. Discuss who “the leader of this world” is in John 14:30. Ask: *Why was Jesus not afraid of Satan?*

18. Ask: *How will the world know that Jesus loves the Father?* (See John 14:31.)

Encourage Application

19. Discuss what the Holy Spirit can do for us? (Using their own words, students should identify the following truths: The Holy Spirit can comfort us, teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance.)

20. Ask class to share a time when they felt the Holy Spirit comfort them, when the Holy Spirit taught them, when the Holy Spirit reminded them. Be prepared to share from your experiences or ask some class members before class to be prepared to share their stories.

21. Read and discuss “Things to Think About” from the Study Guide and close in prayer that the Holy Spirit will lead, guide, and direct in the coming week.

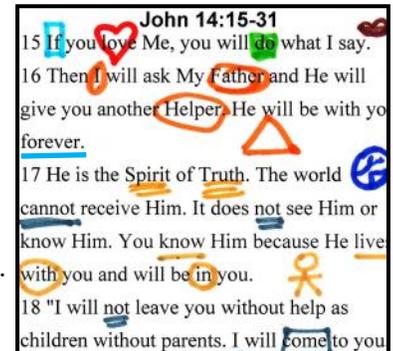
Extra Teaching Ideas

Guide the Study

♦ Review definitions of the Trinity. Say: *There is One God with Three Persons.* Display and discuss the symbols at the bottom of the page. Explain that often the Holy Spirit is pictured as a dove. Ask class to decide which of the two symbols helps them understand the meaning better.

♦ Provide colored pens, pencils or markers. Encourage class to underline, draw, make shapes, and highlight important words or phrases in the verses for this lesson on the last page of the Study Guide. Pause during the study to give time for this activity. Ask members to prepare for future lessons by doing this before coming to class.

♦ Ask: *What are some of the commands Jesus gave us that we can obey to show we love Him?* List these on the board. (Include: Pray, Love others, Love His creation, Honor His name, Love your enemies, Practice forgiveness, Read the Bible, Share the Good News with Others, Help the poor, etc.)



Encourage Application

♦ Hold up a box marked Holy Spirit. Say: *The great gift Jesus gave us when He completed His work on earth is the Holy Spirit.*



♦ Remind the class that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all one God. They are the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. We receive the Holy Spirit’s power as believers. Include the following:

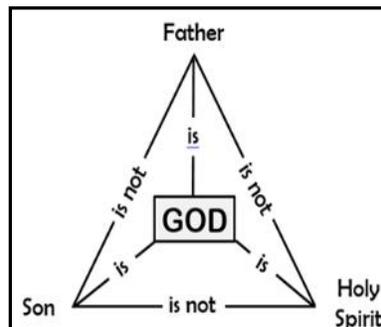
The Holy Spirit is our Helper.

We cannot see Him, but He works within us.

The Holy Spirit helps us to understand what Jesus taught and helps us act on it.

The Holy Spirit is at work in us each day.

We can ask Him for help and guidance.



Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

Lesson 11: It Is Finished!

Lesson Focus

To lead adults to understand the true meaning of Jesus' finished work of redemption.

Bible Text: John 19:16-22, 25-30

Memory Verse

"Jesus knew that everything was now finished. Everything happened as the Holy Writings said it would happen."
(John 19:28a)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, write the four "finished" statements on a poster board or the marker board.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #5, search the Internet for a photo of a hill near Jerusalem that many think might have been Golgotha.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #9, bring in a bottle of apple cider vinegar or red wine vinegar.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #9 & #10, print these verses on cards for use during the lesson: Matthew 27:50, Psalm 69:21.
- ◆ For Encourage Application #11, prepare a card printed with John 3:16.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study, Print these verses on separate cards for a group activity: Psalm 22:1-2, Psalm 22:6-8, Psalm 22:14-15, Psalm 22:16-18, and Psalm 22:27-31.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application, prepare a poster or print copies of the chant adapted from Psalm 24.

Connect with Life

1. Begin class today by introducing the Word List. Write each word on the board and invite a volunteer to give a definition and sample sentence. Allow the class to repeat the words and discuss the meanings.

Say: *Each of these words is important in understanding the work of Jesus to buy us back from sin and death. What does it mean for something to be finished?*

2. Display these four "finished" sayings:

"Finished" Sayings

- "Art is never finished, only abandoned." - Leonardo da Vinci
- "Here is the test to determine whether your mission on earth is finished. If you are alive, it isn't." - Richard Bach
- "A man works from sun to sun, but a woman's work is never done." - Traditional
- "When you are finished changing, you are finished." - Benjamin Franklin

Divide the class into four groups. Assign each group one of these sayings. Ask each group to discuss the meaning of the saying, decide if they agree with it, and think of a similar saying in another culture. Call for reports and say: *The word finished is hard for us to really understand. It is very difficult to find anything that is truly finished, totally complete, never needing repair or changing. Jesus finished buying us back from sin and death, and we will never have to add to or take away from His work.*

Guide the Study

3. Using John 18 and the Study Guide, provide background for the events leading to this lesson. Mention the arrest in the Garden and the trials before the priests and Pilate.

Explain that it was illegal for a Jewish trial to be held at night, that the High Priest was not allowed to speak in a trial, and that witnesses had to agree in order for a decision to be reached. Note that they decided on the punishment before they even had a reason to accuse Him. All of Jesus' trials were against the law. Explain that the Jews had no power to put a person to death, so they took Jesus to the Roman governor, Pilate. He could not find anything wrong with Jesus, but he sentenced Jesus to die anyway.

4. Ask someone to read John 19:16-22. Say: *Pilate tried several things to get the Jews to agree that Jesus could go free. But they called for Jesus to be crucified, a very cruel way to die.*

5. Show an image of Golgotha and say: *The Romans wanted everyone to see people who were being crucified. The accused carried their crosses through the streets of Jerusalem to a hill outside the city. We don't know exactly where this hill is, but it might have been shaped like a human skull and was near a road where travelers could see the crosses. Many people think this is the hill called Golgotha. A sign was put on the cross to tell the charges for which they were being punished.*



Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Golgotha--again_\(2819155401\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Golgotha--again_(2819155401).jpg)

6. Ask: *What was the charge against Jesus?* (He was the King of the Jews.) Use the Study Guide section entitled “Jesus Fulfilled God’s Promise” to lead the discussion. Guide students to understand that Jesus was crucified because He was the Son of God, not because of any crime He had committed.

7. Invite a reader to read aloud John 19:25-27. Ask: *What is the responsibility of the eldest son in caring for parents?* Say: *Since Joseph is not mentioned, we think he may have already died. Jesus was Mary’s eldest son and He should be the one to take care of His mother in her old age.*

8. Ask: *What kinds of things might have been going through the mind of a man who was being crucified?* Lead the discussion that normally a man would be thinking about himself, his own pain and suffering. But Jesus was thinking of others. Guide the discussion as to why Jesus chose John to take care of His mother rather than one of His brothers who were not yet believers.

9. Invite a reader to read John 19:28-30 aloud. Ask another reader to read Psalm 69:21. Say: *Let’s try to relate to this experience.* Pass around a bottle of red wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar. Ask students to smell it. Ask: *If you were thirsty which would you prefer, water or sour wine?* *Jesus was really thirsty, so He drank this sour wine.*

10. Say: *Jesus’ final words were a shout of victory.* Invite a student to read Matthew 27:50. Say: *Jesus cried out with a loud voice. He willingly gave up His life. He was God, and only God has the power to give up His spirit. Only the sinless Son of God could save us from our sins by giving His life for us.*

Encourage Application

11. Use the Study Guide section entitled “Things to Remember” as a guide for applying this lesson. Make three important points:

- Our sins are forgiven when we accept the Good News of Christ’s payment in our place. The story is hard to accept if we try to understand it on our own. We are saved by faith, simply believing.
- There is nothing in this story that can be taken away. Jesus was really God in a human body. He was really pure and holy. Simply believe that He really died for our sin and be forgiven.
- There is nothing to be added to what Jesus did on the cross.

Invite someone to read John 3:16. Ask: *What kinds of things do people say we must do to be saved? What does this verse say it takes to be saved? Simple belief is enough to be forgiven and to have life that lasts forever.* Say: *God knows our needs, and He is ready to offer forgiveness to anyone who simply believes. If you have a question, I am available to talk with you.*

12. End in prayer, thanking God for the gift of His Son.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life:

♦ Ask someone to read the introduction in the Study Guide. Use questions #1, #2 and #3 in Things to Think About to guide the class to understand the magnitude of Jesus’ finished work of salvation.

Guide the Study

♦ If your class is made up of believers who are familiar with this story, consider using Psalm 22:1-2, 6-8, 14-15, 16-18 to point out the promises of God fulfilled by Jesus. Divide the class into four groups, assigning a section of Psalm 22 to each. Ask them to read the verses and determine how those verses were fulfilled by Jesus on the cross.

Say: *Jesus’ death on the cross is not the end of the story.* Invite someone to read Psalm 22:27-31. Say: *This passage tells of the victory Jesus brings to all people. All nations will hear of His salvation and rejoice.*

Encourage Application

♦ Ask the class to say the chant shown below. It is adapted from Psalm 24. Divide the class into three groups, assigning each to read the words in either black, red, or green. Everyone should read the bold black words together.

Say: *This Psalm was sung every week in the Temple worship. It calls for the gates and doors of the Temple to be opened to receive the promised King of the Jews.*

From Psalm 24

The world and all that is in it belong to the LORD; the earth and all who live on it are His.

Who has the right to go up the LORD's hill? Who may enter His holy Temple?

Those who are pure in act and in thought, the LORD will bless them and save them;

Fling wide the gates, open the ancient doors, and the great King will come in.

Who is this great King?

He is the LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, victorious in battle.

Fling wide the gates, open the ancient doors, and the great King will come in.

Who is this great King?

The triumphant LORD—He is the great king!

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

Lesson 12: I Have Seen the Lord!

Lesson Focus

To lead adults to experience the peace and purpose of the risen Christ.

Bible Text

John 20:1-21

Memory Verse

“Then Jesus said to them again, ‘May you have peace. As the Father has sent Me, I also am sending you.’” (John 20:21)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, prepare a poster like the one shown below to be used when students first enter the classroom. Title the poster: “When I Am Very Sad.” Provide markers for students to use to check off which of these options apply to themselves.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #3, search the Internet for a picture of a tomb with a stone like the one Jesus was buried in.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #4, find a map showing the location of Magdala.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study, prepare a chart like the one shown on the following page to use in a study of the similarities of details in the events of Christmas and Easter in the life of Jesus.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application, write the individual words of the memory verse on cards. Bring tape or magnets to affix the cards to the marker board.

When I Am Very Sad:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I eat a lot. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't eat at all. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I hide away by myself. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't talk to anyone. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can't stop talking. | <input type="checkbox"/> I can't stop crying. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't cry at all. | <input type="checkbox"/> I stay busy. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I sit and think. | |

Connect with Life

1. As students enter, ask them to check the options on the poster that are most likely to be their reaction to a very sad time. Make observations from the results. Indicate that there is not one right way to respond to sadness.

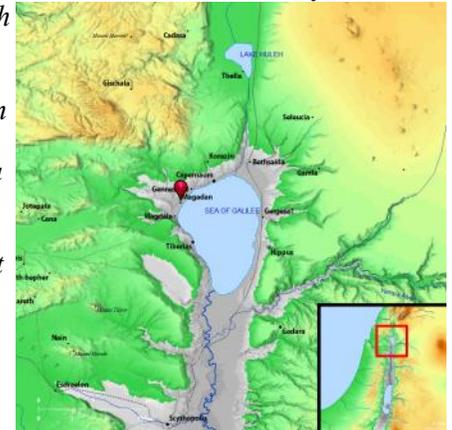
2. Say: *We all respond differently to sadness. Jesus' followers also reacted in different ways to His death. But no matter how we respond, Jesus brings peace and purpose to everyone who believes in Him.*

Guide the Study

3. Ask someone to read aloud John 20:1-10. Show the picture of the tomb and explain that the stone was very heavy. Women could not have moved the stone by themselves.

4. Invite someone to read Luke 8:1-3 aloud. Show the map and point out Magdala on the Sea of Galilee. Say: *We*

don't know very much about Mary. She was called Magdalene because she was from the city of Magdala which was on the Sea of Galilee. This was an area where Jesus could have easily met Mary. The story of Mary's healing from demons is not told in the Gospels, but we know Mary served Jesus faithfully.



Source: <https://bibleatlas.org/regional/magadan.htm>

5. Invite a student to read Mark 15:40-41,47. Say: *On the day Jesus died, Mary and some other women stayed near the cross and then watched to see where He was buried. They wanted to serve Jesus even after His death by treating His body with respect. But Jesus died just before the Passover began at sundown on Friday. Saturday was the Day of Rest. It was not a day the women could have gone to the tomb. How do you think they felt on Saturday as they waited? Very early in the morning on Sunday the women went to the tomb while it was still dark.*

6. Ask: *What was the first thing Mary thought when she saw the large stone rolled away from the door of the tomb? (that someone had taken His body) Refer to question #2 in Things to Think About. Ask: How would it have changed Mary's sorrow to understand that God was working on that day?*

7. Invite someone to read the fourth paragraph of the Study Guide section entitled “Mary Served Jesus.” Begin with, “No one respected the word of a woman....” Explain why it was important for Peter and John to go check out what Mary had said.

8. Ask: *What did Peter and John see in the tomb?* Explain why the men were convinced that Jesus had returned to life after seeing the cloths that had wrapped Jesus' body. Ask: *What is the difference between understanding and believing?* Peter and John believed that Jesus had returned to life, but they did not yet understand what that meant.

9. Invite a reader to read John 20:11-16. Ask: *Why do you think Peter and John returned home?* (Maybe they went to tell the other followers, were going away to think about what had happened, or did not know what else to do.) *Why do you think Mary stayed by the tomb?* (Maybe she could not stop crying, or she wanted to see for herself.) *What did Mary see that Peter and John did not see?* (She saw two angels and Jesus!)

10. Ask someone to read the last paragraph of the Study Guide section entitled "Mary Saw Jesus." Ask: *Why did Jesus to use Mary's heart language?* If there are internationalists in your class, invite conversation about heart languages and their importance in understanding the Good News. Make the point that Jesus wants a personal relationship with us and meets us in ways we can best understand.

11. Say: *Jesus used Mary's name, a familiar way to speak to her. Mary used the term for the highest, most respected teacher.* Ask: *What does it tell us about Jesus' body if Mary could take hold of Jesus?* (He was not a ghost or a spirit.)

12. Invite someone to read John 20:17-21. Say: *The most important message of all time was delivered by a woman. Let's look at the four important things Jesus wanted Mary to know and tell.* Begin a list on the board of these four statements. Stimulate a discussion of the deeper meaning of each statement.

1) "Do not hold on to Me." (Jesus' presence is not limited to His body. He is with us now even though we cannot touch Him.)

2) "I have not yet gone up to My Father." (This is a unique period of time in which Jesus was still with the followers, but in a new body. He would be going to the Father soon, but He needed to spend time with His followers first.)

3) "Go tell my brothers..." Invite someone to read 1 John 3:1 and John 1:12. Invite someone to read the second paragraph of the Study Guide section entitled "Mary Got a Message from Jesus."

4) "Tell them that I will go up to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God!" Say: *Mary was a part of the family of God, too! Jesus loved Mary and invited her into the family of God. God is the Almighty Creator, but He is also our Father.*

13. Say: *Jesus said, "May you have peace," twice that night. Why was this message of peace important enough to repeat?*

14. Ask: *How was Jesus' body like our bodies? How was it different?*

Encourage Application

15. Use questions #3, #4, and #5 in Things to Think About to conclude this lesson. Ask: *What might keep us from experiencing God's peace today?* Refer back to the chart you used in Connect with Life #1. Point out that hiding from God, staying too busy, or feeding our own desires are ways we rob ourselves of God's peace. Say: *We must come face-to-face with God and obey His commands to have His peace and purpose in our lives.*

16. End with prayer for the peace of Christ to make us bold witnesses for Him.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Guide the Study

♦ If your class has studied the Christmas story, you might consider comparing the message of both events in the life of Jesus. Use a chart like this one to draw out details of both to compare and contrast.

| Details | Christmas | Easter |
|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Surprising witnesses | Shepherds | A woman |
| Cloths | Baby cloths | Grave cloths |
| Angels | A host | Two |
| Surprising locations | A manger | A rich man's tomb |
| Message | Peace on earth | "May you have peace." |
| Foretold | Born in Bethlehem | Return to life |
| Reaction | Rejoicing | Filled with joy |

Encourage Application

Draw attention to the memory verse in the Study Guide. Read the verse together several times. Then distribute the words on cards you prepared. Ask students to assemble the cards in the right order without looking at the Study Guide. Affix them to the marker board. Ask: *Is there a connection between "May you have peace," and being sent by the Father?* Help the class to understand that we are most at peace when we are fulfilling our purpose as Christ's witnesses.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

The Gospel of John: Grace and Truth

Lesson 13: Restored to Service

Lesson Focus

To lead adults to understand that saying aloud that we love Jesus restores our relationship with Christ and prepares us for a life of service for Him.

Bible Text

John 21:3-19

Memory Verse

"If you say with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved from the punishment of sin." (Romans 10:9)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #2, prepare a poster of statements from Peter such as the ones shown below, or write them on the marker board.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #11, recruit two people to read the parts of Jesus and Peter in John 21:15-18. Highlight the words of Jesus and Peter in different colors. Ask the reader of Jesus' words to open his arms as if on a cross when he reads verse 18.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study, provide a copy of Psalm 145 from the New Life Version and colored highlighters or colored pencils for each student.

Peter's Words

"Go away from me, Lord, because I am a sinful man." (Luke 5:8)

"You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." (Matthew 16:16)

"Never, Lord! This must not happen to You!" (Matthew 16:22)

"Even if all men give up and turn away because of you, I will never." (Matthew 26:33)

"I do not know this man!" (Matthew 26:72)

Connect with Life

1. Say: *There is something about putting our thoughts and feelings into words that seals our experiences. Tell of a time when you saw something so wonderful you had to say something. Ask: Have you ever said something you wish you could take back?*

2. Point out the list of statements of Peter. Briefly describe the situation surrounding each statement to give an overview of Peter's life with Jesus.

Guide the Study

3. Recall the death and resurrection of Jesus as studied in Lessons 11 and 12. Say: *This is the third time Jesus appeared to His followers after He came back to life.*

4. Add one more quote to the list of Peter's statements: "I am going fishing." Discuss why Peter may have decided to go fishing and why the others followed him.

5. Invite a reader to read John 21:3-7 aloud. Use the background information in the Study Guide section entitled "Fishing with Jesus" to lead the discussion. Ask: *Why might Peter have decided to go fishing this night? What made John recognize that it was Jesus calling to them from the shoreline? Why did Peter jump into the water to rush to meet Jesus?*

6. Call on someone to read John 21:8-14. Use the Study Guide section entitled "Fellowshipping with Jesus" to lead the discussion. Ask: *What do you think the conversation was like around the fire that morning? Point out that even as the King of Kings, Jesus was humble enough to serve. Jesus set the example of unselfish service. Point to the poster of Peter's words and ask: Do you think Peter may have been remembering some of these things he had said in the past? What might Peter have been feeling as they talked with Jesus?*

7. Read John 21:15-19. Jesus took Peter aside for a private talk. Say: *Although Peter spent time fellowshipping with Jesus, it was important for him to say aloud that he loved Jesus. Ask: Why did Jesus use the name "Simon, son of John" instead of the more familiar "Peter?" (Perhaps to give this conversation more importance in Peter's mind?) Discuss the meaning of "more than these."*

8. Ask: *When someone says, "I love you," what do you usually say back? ("I love you, too.") Jesus did not do that. He said, "Feed my lambs." Discuss the meaning of Jesus hearing Peter's confession of love and immediately giving him a job to do. Jesus' call indicates His trust in Peter.*

9. Ask someone to read the third paragraph in the Study Guide section entitled "Following Jesus." Point out that a shepherd serves the sheep. Ask: *How would a shepherd serve the sheep? (feeding, protecting, guiding) Jesus called Peter to be the shepherd, not the boss of the church.*

10. Ask: *Why did Jesus ask the same question three times?* Remind the class that Peter had denied Jesus three times. These three confessions of his love were stronger than the three denials. Although Peter acted like he loved Jesus, it was important for him to say it.

11. Ask the two people you recruited earlier to read the words of Jesus and Peter in John 21:15-18 with expression.

Jesus: Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?

Peter: Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.

Jesus: Feed My lambs.

Jesus: Simon, son of John, do you love Me?

Peter: Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.

Jesus: Take care of My sheep.

Jesus: Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"

Peter: (sadly) Lord, You know everything. You know that I love You.

Jesus: (with arms out) Feed My sheep. For sure, I tell you, when you were young, you put on your belt and went wherever you wanted to go. When you get old, you will put out your hands and someone else will put on your belt and take you away where you do not want to go.

12. Say: *Jesus called Peter to be the shepherd of the church, but Jesus wanted him to know that it would not be an easy thing. What picture flashed through Peter's mind when Jesus said, "put out your hands?"* (the cross) *How would Peter feel about dying on a cross?* (afraid) Say: *We know that Peter died on a cross outside Rome. Some old writings tell us that he asked to be crucified head down because he did not feel worthy to die in the same way Jesus did.*

13. Say: *John and the other followers were walking behind Jesus and Peter. Why would Peter ask about how John would die? Why would Jesus tell Peter it was not for him to know?*

Encourage Application

14. Add 2 Peter 1:3 to the list of statements of Peter. Say: *Our mistakes are never powerful enough to keep us from God's call on our lives. He knows what He created us to be. And He gives us everything we need to live for Him.*

15. Read the Memory Verse for today's lesson. Say: *We can all have a restored relationship with God when we say with our mouths that Jesus is Lord. We must believe deep in our hearts that Jesus rose from the dead. Then*

He gives us new life in Him and forgiveness of our sins.

Say: *I am available to talk with you about this most important decision in our lives.*

16. End in prayer.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Guide the Study

◆ As a supplement to this lesson, invite students to examine Psalm 145. Ask half the class to highlight each word that calls for us to use our mouths to bless God. Ask the other half to highlight all the ways God blesses us. Call for reports.

Say: *God cares about what we say with our mouths. There are many ways listed here to use our mouths to bless God. There are many ways He blesses us. It was important that Peter say aloud that he loved Jesus. It is important for us today to do so as well.*

Truths from the Lesson

- **God has a purpose for each of our lives.** We are all different, and God uses us all differently. When we try to serve Him in our own strength, we come up short. (Peter and the others did not catch any fish until they followed Jesus' instructions.)
- **Our mistakes are not powerful enough to prevent God from using us.** (Peter denied Jesus and was still chosen to shepherd the church.)
- **God supplies all our needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus.** (Peter served the church faithfully, but he always knew that his success was because of what God supplied.)

Encourage Application

◆ Read the Study Guide section entitled "Things to Remember" to conclude the lesson.

Point out these truths:

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

Christmas Lesson: Jesus' Surprising Birth

Lesson Focus

To lead adults to discover and declare the surprising story of peace with God available through Jesus Christ.

Bible Text

Luke 2:1-20

Memory Verse

"Greatness and honor to our God in the highest heaven and peace on earth among men who please Him." (Luke 2:14)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Connect with Life #1, gather old Christmas cards with a wide variety of illustrations. Separate the illustration from any messages.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #6, make copies of the student worksheet on the next page.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life, bring in a computer and be prepared to discuss this website of false information: <https://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/>

Connect with Life

1. Hand each student a Christmas card illustration as they enter the classroom. Ask students to stand in a circle with their cards. Say: *I have something to read to you. As I read it, pass your card to the right when you hear the word **right** and to the left when you hear the word **left**.* Read the paragraph in the box below.

If all that we knew about the Christmas story came from these cards, we might not know the **right** story. How can we know if we have the **right** facts? In some of the pictures, Jesus has been **left** out. It is hard to tell what is **right** and what has been **left** out. Were Mary and Joseph **left** alone without help to bring baby Jesus into the world? Is it **right** for Santa Claus to be **left** in when he is not in the Bible? How can we know we have the **right** facts? We need to go **right** to the Bible for the **right** story of the birth of Jesus.

2. Ask students to tell what they might think the Christmas story is about just from looking at the cards they now hold. On the marker board, record their observations of what Christmas must be about.

Guide the Study

3. Say: *From Luke 1:1-4, we know that Luke carefully checked into the facts of the life of Jesus. He talked with people who lived these stories. He wanted his readers to know the truth of what they believed about Jesus.*

4. Invite a reader to read Luke 2:1-7. Hand out the worksheets you prepared, and lead students to record the facts as we know them in section A.

Say: *Augustus was the first Roman Emperor. He ruled from 31 BC to 14 AD. This helps us date the birth of Jesus. But Luke includes more detail to set the date more closely. He says that this was the first time people were counted in the Roman Empire. We know that the Roman government conducted a wide-scale census every fourteen years beginning in 6 AD. So we know that Jesus was born around 6 AD. God promised that the Savior would be born in Bethlehem. This was recorded more than 500 years before Caesar came to power. (See Micah 5:2.)*

5. Ask: *What would you do to prepare for a baby to be born in your family? Do you think Mary and Joseph had plans like these for the Son of God? God did not do things the way Mary and Joseph expected.* Use the background information in the Study Guide section entitled "Why Bethlehem?" to guide your discussion. Invite students to fill in the blanks in their worksheet section B.

6. Ask someone to read Luke 2:8-14. Use the background information in the Study Guide section entitled "Why Shepherds?" to assist students in filling in the blanks in section C of their worksheets.

7. Invite someone to read Luke 2:15-20. Ask: *What decision did the shepherds have to make after the angels left? (whether to go and see for themselves or to ignore the Good News and stay in the field) What would have happened if they had not gone to Bethlehem that night? (They would have missed a blessing.)*

8. Say: *Just like the shepherds, we have to choose to seek Jesus for ourselves. Once we have found Him, we must tell the Good News to others!*

9. Use the background information in the Study Guide section entitled "Why Seek Jesus?" to help students fill in the answers for section D on their worksheet.

Encourage Application

10. Read the section entitled "Things to Remember" from the Study Guide. Use "Things to Think About" to guide the discussion. Point out that the Bible can be trusted because it is not the word of only one man and because God uses it to touch our lives.

11. Refer to the list you made at the beginning of class. Ask a student to come to the board and erase any facts that are not true.

12. Say: *The surprising truth of the Christmas story is amazing enough without adding anything to it. The sad truth is that we are all enemies of God because of our sin. The joyful news is that Jesus came to make God's enemies His children. Everyone needs to hear this Good News of Great Joy!*

13. Dismiss in prayer that those who have heard the Good News will share it with others. Pray that those who have heard it for the first time will understand that Jesus came to make them children of God.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Use the website mentioned in the Study Guide introduction to guide a discussion of how important it is to know the truth and to check the facts. Allow a few minutes for students to discover that the information in this website is all false. It is the word of only one man.

Say: *We can trust the words of Luke because he carefully checked the facts before writing. History confirms what Luke recorded about the birth of Jesus.* Refer to Luke 1:1-4.

Guide the Study

◆ Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group one of the Scripture passages and the Study Guide section that goes with it. Ask each group to read, discuss it together, and be prepared to tell the class the surprising glory of God from their section. Groups may decide to give a report, to tell the story, or to act out the story. Allow time for each group to prepare and then call for reports in order. Guide and expand the discussion as students report.

Worksheet answers:

A. 1. 31 BC to 14 AD; 2. 6 AD; 3. 6 AD; 4. 500 years

B. 1. 90 miles, three days; 2. no one to help her when the baby was born; 3. in a stable; 4. a manger was a feeding box for animals

C. 1. the shepherds and sheep were in the fields at night; 2. bright; 3. shepherds were thought to be dirty; 4. He was lying in a manger; 5. the angels returned to heaven

D. 1. they believed the Good News from the angels; 2. the shepherds told Mary and Joseph about the angels; 3. surprised

Facts of Jesus' Birth

A. Get the Facts:

1. Caesar Augustus ruled from ___ BC to ___ AD.
2. The first time a counting was taken was in ___ AD.
3. Jesus was born around ___ AD.
4. _____ years before Caesar Augustus ruled, God said that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem .

B. The Facts of Jesus' Birth:

1. Mary and Joseph had to travel about ___ miles for ___ days from Nazareth to Bethlehem.
2. Mary wrapped the baby herself. So there was probably _____.
3. Mary laid the baby in a manger so they were probably _____.
4. It was unusual to put a baby in a manger because _____.

C. Facts about the Shepherds

1. It was probably not a cold night because _____.
2. The glory of the Lord must be very _____.
3. It is surprising that the shepherds were the first to see the newborn Savior because _____.
4. The shepherds had to look for one baby that was different from all the others in Bethlehem. Jesus was different because _____.
5. We know the angels did not go to the stable because _____.

D. Facts about Praising God and Telling His Story

1. The shepherds decided to go to Bethlehem because _____.
2. Mary and Joseph found out about the angels when _____.
3. Everyone who heard the Good News of Jesus' birth was _____.