



# TEACHER BOOK

YEAR 3 • BOOK 2

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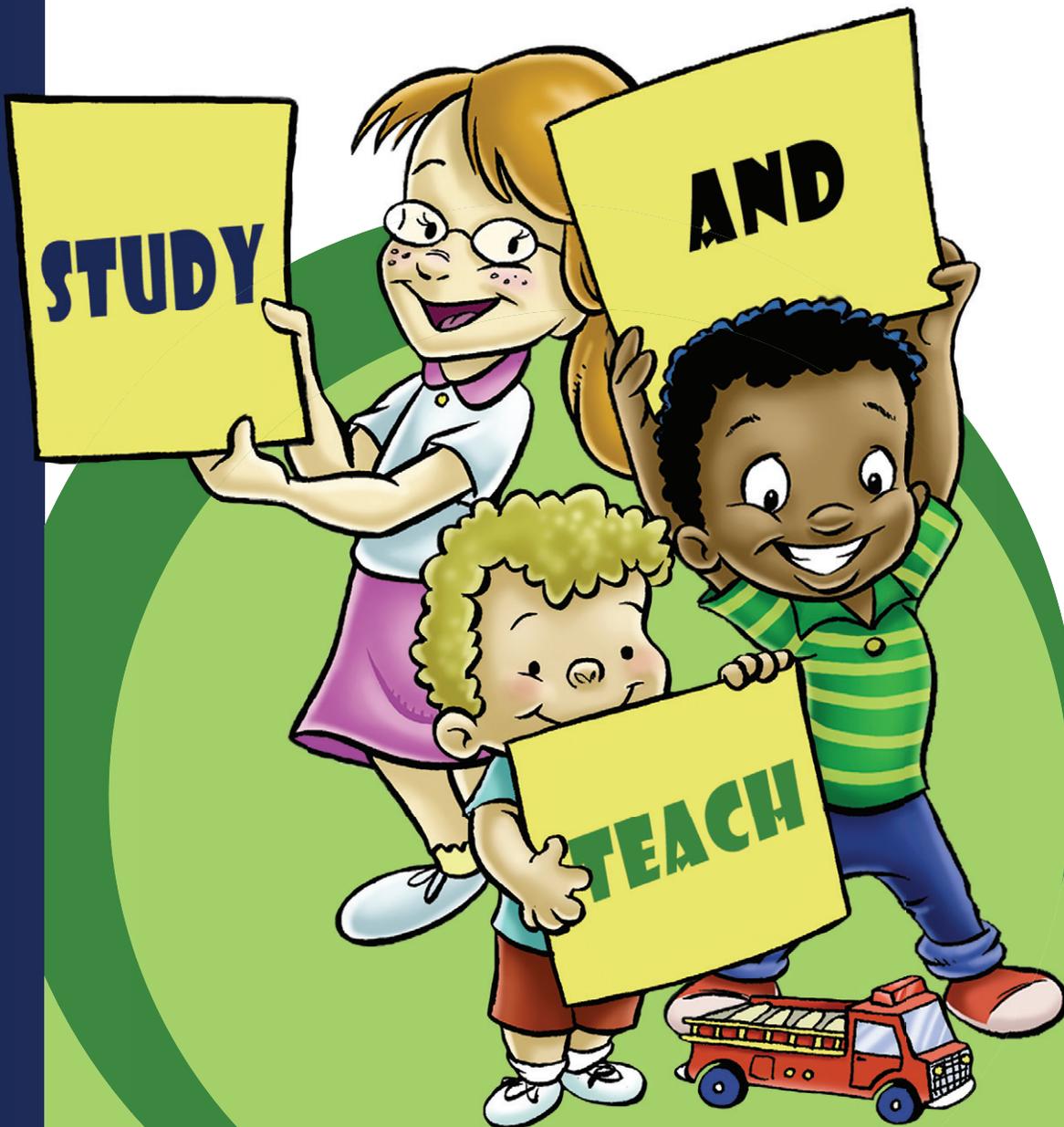
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# WELCOME TO *Generations of Grace*



This curriculum has been designed to deepen your own study of God's word so that you might be able to properly understand and accurately teach each lesson. It's our prayer that this curriculum would be a blessing to your ministry and home as God uses it to edify your teachers, evangelize your children, and encourage your families.



## Study the Lesson

This section is designed to edify and equip teachers and to guide you through the preparation of an age appropriate Bible lesson.

- **Central Truth** – Identifies the theme and focal point of lesson.
- **Supporting Truths** – Provides appropriate objectives for mastering the central truth.
- **Spotlight on the Gospel** – Explains how each lesson connects to the gospel.
- **Lesson Commentary** – Communicates the truth of each lesson to the teacher's heart and mind.



## Teach the Lesson

Use the child involvement resources to engage children from the moment they walk into the classroom until pick-up time.

- **Outlines** – Guide both teachers and children through the lesson.
- **Lesson Questions** – Foster greater interaction between teacher and child.
- **Activities** – Creative opening ideas, visual aids, and crafts to introduce, illustrate, and apply lesson.

## Additional Resources

Use these additional resources to help support your lessons and to knit together the church and the home, ensuring that what is taught on Sunday matches what is learned throughout the week.

- **Coloring Book**
- **Craft Book**
- **Activity Book**
- **Student Journal**
- **Family Devotional**

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## LESSON 16

*Jesus confronts the rich young ruler*

MATTHEW 19:16-26



**To receive eternal life, depend on Jesus alone.**



***“Jesus said to him, ‘If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.’” (Matt 19:21).***

## Supporting Truths

1. Do not depend on yourself.
2. Depend because you are not good.
3. Depend by following Jesus alone.
4. Depend because only God can save.
5. Eternal life is being alive with God.

## Objectives

1. Explain what was wrong with the man’s question.
2. Compare yourself to the Law’s requirements.
3. Explain why Jesus told the man to sell everything.
4. Describe Jesus’ illustration and the disciples’ reaction.
5. List the four terms this passage uses for eternal life.

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

*Jesus confronts the rich young ruler • Matthew 19:16-26*



## Lesson Summary

As Jesus began to travel toward Jerusalem, a rich young ruler fell at Jesus' feet and asked what he could do to receive eternal life. Instead of leading the man in a simple sinner's prayer, Jesus exposed the man's pride and selfishness. The man went away sad because he depended on himself and loved his wealth instead of trusting and loving Jesus alone. Jesus explained that no one can be saved by his own efforts, but only by the power of God.

## Spotlight on the Gospel

God's law reveals sin, but it cannot save. Its purpose is to pronounce a guilty verdict on all humanity, for it is impossible to perfectly obey God's law. The law is necessary and good because it shows a sinner his sin and helps him see that he needs salvation. This is why Jesus pointed the rich young ruler to the 10 commandments; and this is why the rich young ruler departed from Jesus' presence without salvation: he refused to acknowledge his sin.

LAST WEEK



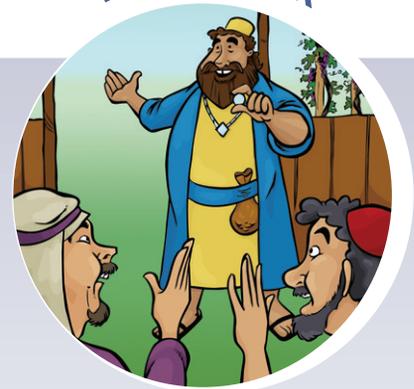
Jesus is gloriously  
transfigured  
*Luke 9:27-36*

THIS WEEK



Jesus confronts the rich  
young ruler  
*Matthew 19:16-26*

NEXT WEEK



Jesus teaches the  
parable of the equal  
wages  
*Matthew 19:27-20:16*

JESUS' MINISTRY IN GALILEE

JESUS' JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

# Lesson Commentary

*To receive eternal life, depend on Jesus alone.*

The gospel of Matthew shows that Jesus is the *Messiah, the expected King and Savior* (Matt 1:16). Yet despite Jesus' teaching and miracles, most people rejected His message. They received free food, but not Jesus Himself (John 6:35, 66). They embraced the glory of the kingdom, but not the cost of following the King (Matt 16:21–24). They wanted a king, but only one they could control (John 6:15). They did not receive, follow, and submit to Jesus because they did not see how great Jesus is or how helpless they were. To keep us from that deadly error, Jesus warns us that eternal life is only for those who follow Him in total dependence.

## Deny your own goodness (19:16–20)

A man came to Jesus with a question (Matt 19:16), but notice when he came. Jesus had left Galilee for the last time before briefly staying in Perea across the Jordan from Judea (19:1). Now He was traveling toward Jerusalem, where He would die about two weeks later (Mark 10:17, 32–34). Also, right before the man came, Jesus declared that the kingdom of heaven is reserved for those who, like little children, are completely dependent (19:14; 18:3–4). Therefore when the man asks, "What good deed must I do to have eternal life" (19:16), there is a major problem. He does not realize that he is as helpless as a newborn and that he needs Jesus Himself (Luke 18:15).

The man wants *eternal life*, but what does this mean? First, it is eternal, *life that begins in this life and never ends*. Second, Jesus calls it "life" (Matt 19:17). Just as a body with physical life responds to its physical environment, so also a person with eternal life is *responsive to spiritual life, knowing God truly and personally* (John 17:3). Third, eternal life is the *kingdom of heaven or kingdom of God* (Matt 19:23–24). It is *life under Christ's glorious and eternal reign* (Rev 21–22), a gift received only by those who allow Christ to be their king. Fourth, eternal life is being saved (Matt 19:25). It is salvation from sin, Satan, sadness, enmity,

judgment, disease, death—from every aspect of the curse. This salvation is reserved for those who realize they need to be saved, those who submit to God in total devotion and dependence.

But the young man did not understand eternal life because he did not see his need to be saved or his need to know God personally. He did, however, understand that something was missing from his life. Even though he was rich, young, powerful, moral, and highly respected (19:22; Luke 18:18), he ran up to Jesus and fell at His feet (Mark 10:17). Still, as good as the man was, he did not understand that he fell far short of God's definition of "good." Jesus explained that it is God, not man, who defines what is good (Matt 19:17). Humans may construct their own standard of "good," but it is nothing like God's. We substitute evil for good and good for evil (Isa 5:20) in an attempt to justify our own sinful desires. But man-made standards are not pleasing to God. He alone is holy (1 Sam 2:2), and He alone is the standard of good and evil.

Since God's law reflects God's character, Jesus quoted the 5<sup>th</sup> through the 9<sup>th</sup> commandments (Matt 19:18–19; Exod 20:12–16), plus the 2<sup>nd</sup> greatest commandment that sums them up (Matt 22:39; Lev 19:18). Jesus chose these commands that deal with human relationships because the way we treat people reveals what we think about God (1 John 4:20). Unfortunately, the young man thought that these laws covered only outward behavior. He did not see that God's law also concerns the heart (Ps 51:6), that anger is the same as murder and lust the same as adultery (Matt 5:22, 28). Blinded by pride, he thought he actually loved his neighbor as himself. Eternal life eluded this man because he depended on his own goodness and not on Jesus.

## Devote yourself to Jesus (19:21–22)

When Jesus gave one more command (19:21), he was not teaching salvation by works. He was exposing the young man's heart, showing what this man really

### THINK ABOUT IT

A person can be sincerely religious, yet not have eternal life.



# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

*Jesus confronts the rich young ruler • Matthew 19:16–26*



loved and trusted most: possessions. Wealth is an idol both of the rich and the poor. We all want more. We love money because it gets us what we want. We trust money because it gives us security. We think possessions give us control, but more often than not, our possessions control us. Jesus was not explaining how this man could earn eternal life. He was warning him that it was impossible to serve two masters (6:24). To live in Christ's kingdom, we must serve Christ alone.



## THINK ABOUT IT

"You cannot serve God and money" (Matt 6:24).

It is impossible to follow both wealth and Jesus. The path of wealth is the path of prideful pleasure and self-confidence. But the path of Jesus is the path of humble self-denial (16:24)

and trusting submission to the Father (1 Pet 2:21–23). But why must we follow Jesus to have eternal life? Because Jesus is eternal life (John 14:6; 1 John 5:20). Why must we follow Jesus to enter God's kingdom? Because Jesus is the King. The young man did realize that the life he was asking for was standing right in front of him.

Unfortunately, this man was controlled by his wealth, not by Jesus, so he went away grieving (Matt 19:22). He wanted eternal life, but he did not want Jesus. He wanted to be good, but he did not want to admit he needed Christ's goodness on his behalf. He wanted



## THINK ABOUT IT

What is your greatest love?

Jesus to teach him, but he would not let Christ control Him. He showed by his refusal that he was seeking eternal life out of love for himself, not out of love for Jesus.

## Depend wholly on the Father (19:23–26)

This lesson was for Jesus' disciples too. They had tried to turn the children away (19:13), but they had no

problem with a rich man interrupting Jesus. They too needed to learn that salvation depends on God, not on human achievement. Salvation is not for those like the rich man, who think they can gain salvation by their own strength or resources. It is for those who, like infants, depend wholly on the Father.

Just as camel—the largest animal in Palestine—cannot go through the eye of a needle, so the rich cannot enter heaven (19:24). It is impossible. But why single out the rich? In those days, wealth was seen as a sign of God's blessing. It was seen as evidence of God's favor and approval. The Jews thought the rich were the most likely to be saved. But if it is impossible for the rich to be saved, as Jesus said, then no one can be saved (19:25).

To be clear, Jesus said it again: with men, salvation is not just hard—it is impossible (19:26; Rom 3:20). Even our best behavior is like dirty, nasty clothes (Isa 64:6). We cannot even repent unless God intervenes (2 Tim 2:25). We cannot come to Jesus unless the Father draws us (John 6:44). We are blind unless He opens our eyes (2 Cor 4:4–6). We are spiritually dead—not just sick or weak—and totally lost in our sins, unable to do anything to come back to life (Eph 2:1).

Then comes the best news ever: what we cannot do, God can (Matt 19:26), for "Salvation belongs to the LORD!" (Ps 3:8; Jonah 2:9). You can resist His power, like the rich young ruler, and die without joy. Or you can depend on His power like a little infant, and live with joy, for it is because of the LORD's faithful love that we do not perish (Lam 3:22). Look to God, and rest upon His strength: "For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken" (Ps 62:5–6).

## THINK ABOUT IT

Salvation is exchanging living death for dying life.



# Lesson Outline

*To receive eternal life, depend on Jesus alone.*



## AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

To receive eternal life . . .

1. Admit that you are not good (19:16–20).
2. Make Jesus your boss (19:21–22).
3. Depend on God's power (19:23–26).



## AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Deny your own goodness (19:16–20).
  - A man thinks he can earn eternal life (19:16).
  - Jesus said God sets the standard for what is good (19:17).
  - Jesus used the law to reveal God's standard of good (19:18–19).
  - The man was blinded by pride (19:20).
2. Devote yourself to Jesus (19:21–22).
  - Jesus told the man he must serve Him alone (19:21).
  - The man loved himself more than Jesus (19:22).
3. Depend wholly on the Father (19:23–26).
  - It is impossible for anyone to save himself (19:23–25).
  - Only God has power to save (19:26).





## Lesson Questions

*Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.*



### Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. What did the rich young ruler want?**  
Eternal life.
- 2. How did he think he could get eternal life?**  
By doing something good.
- 3. Had he really kept all the laws Jesus told him?**  
No. The Law shows that no one is good according to God's standard.
- 4. Who is the only one who can save us?**  
God.



### Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. Who came to Jesus with a question?**  
A rich young ruler, someone who was well-respected by people.
- 2. What is eternal life?**  
It is not just living forever (quantity). It is a new kind of life (quality), when a person lives with God. Jesus is eternal life, because Jesus is the way to be with God.
- 3. Why did Jesus tell the man to keep the commandments?**  
To see if the man would confess that he was not good enough.
- 4. What did Jesus tell the man to do with his wealth?**  
He told him to sell all his possessions and give to the poor.
- 5. Why did Jesus tell him to sell everything?**  
To reveal what the man loved and trusted most—himself or Jesus. To get rid of the wealth that was keeping the man from loving and trusting Jesus alone.
- 6. What did Jesus tell him to do last?**  
“Follow Me.” Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Only those who love and serve Jesus alone receive eternal life.
- 7. How hard is it for a rich person to get into God's kingdom?**  
It is impossible, like a camel going through the eye of a needle.
- 8. Since only God can give eternal life, what should you do?**  
Depend on God like an infant depending on his mother or father—not trying to earn it by your behavior.

# Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

## YOU CANNOT GET THROUGH

Jesus said that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to be saved. Bring a needle to class and some thread with various thicknesses. Ask the children which ones they think you will be able to thread through the needle. Bring out a thick rope and ask the children whether you could thread it through the needle. Then show them a picture of a camel. What can be harder than getting a camel through a needle? In today's lesson, we will see that Jesus said something was even harder than getting a camel through the eye of a needle.

## WHO WANTS TO GO TO HEAVEN?

Who wants to go to heaven? How hard is it to get to heaven? In today's lesson, a certain animal will tell us about getting to heaven. Watch and listen carefully to find out what animal it is. As you teach the lesson, paste the various parts of a camel picture onto the board until by the end of the lesson the children can see the complete camel. Ask them what this animal tells us about heaven.



ILLUSTRATE

## LADDER & MIRROR

Bring in a ladder and a mirror. The young ruler thought God's law is a ladder to climb up in order to get to God. Can you ever climb up to God by your own efforts? No (Isa 64:6). But Jesus used the law like a mirror—when we look in that mirror, we see how sinful our reflection is (Rom 3:20). The young ruler looked at himself in the mirror of God's word, but his pride blinded him from seeing his own sinful reflection (Jas 1:23–24).

## OR THE LEOPARD HIS SPOTS?

Bring in a stuffed leopard (or show a picture of one). Ask the children, "Can a leopard change its spots?" (Jer 13:23). Then ask, "Can you get rid of the sin in you?" Explain that just as a leopard cannot take his own spots away, so we can never be good enough—never keep the law perfectly enough—to get rid of our sin.



APPLY

## WHAT DO YOU VALUE MOST?

See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*.

**Materials:** Craft page, cardstock, crayons, glue stick, brad, scissors.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color it with crayons. Then cut every part. Use the brad to connect the verse with the base of the scale. Glue the scale pans on each side of the scale. Then glue the money on one side and the cross on the other.

*What Do You Value Most?*  
See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*



# TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus confronts the rich young ruler • Matthew 19:16–26



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

## SKIT: CAN YOU GET TO MY HOUSE?

A man comes asking whether he can come to your house to visit. Explain that he could never get there, but he insists he wants to try. Explain that you live far away (he could walk). You live very far away (he could drive). You live across the ocean (he could swim). You live on the top of a mountain, etc. Jesus once met a man who wanted to know how to get to God’s “house,” and Jesus had to show him that he could not get there. After the lesson, end the skit by telling the man that he cannot get to your house, but if he asks you, you can take him. Only Jesus can take us to be with His father; we cannot get there on our own.

## MIRROR, MIRROR

Put dark stickers on your face. As children arrive and ask about the stickers, act like nothing is wrong. Finally, tell the children you know how to settle this: a mirror. Look at your face in a mirror and confess that the children were right. God’s law is just like a mirror: it reveals our sin (Rom 3:19–20).



ILLUSTRATE

## BOOTSTRAPS

The rich young ruler was attempting to “pull himself up by his own bootstraps.” He sought something he could do to earn salvation. However, as Jesus revealed, salvation is impossible apart from the power of God. Bring boots to class and show the children the impossibility of pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps.

## THE STANDARD

Illustrate “standard” by using height: Am I tall or short? How about compared to NBA players? What about gymnasts? What about Dutch people (the tallest people group, where 6 feet is average for men)? What about Indonesians (the shortest people group, where 5 feet 2 inches is average for men)? What is the standard for “good”? Perfection—God Himself.



APPLY

## IMPOSSIBLE/POSSIBLE

See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1.

**Materials:** Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, yarn, scissors, glue stick.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color it with crayons. Cut the two sides of the bookmark and glue them together. Fold the end with the writing “With men, salvation is . . .” and make a hole on the other side. Use a piece of yarn to make a lace for the bookmark.

*Impossible/Possible*  
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1.



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

**SUNDAR SINGH, PART 1**

Sundar Singh was a Sikh in India who became a Christian and traveled throughout India, Tibet, and China spreading the Gospel. On one of his travels, he met a sadhu (a Hindu holy man) who was sitting surrounded by four fires on a hot day. Sundar asked why. The sadhu said, “I am disciplining my body. I surround myself with fire all summer, and in the winter I stand for hours in the icy river below.” Sundar asked, “And what have you gained from this discipline?” “Nothing,” the sadhu replied. “I do not hope to gain or learn anything in this present life, and about the future I can say nothing.” He was trying hopelessly to earn eternal life. Story from *Sundar Singh: Footprints over the Mountains*.

**HE WENT AWAY SORROWFUL**

Today we’re going to meet someone who came to Jesus asking how he could become a Christian, but he went away sad—he did not receive salvation. Does that seem strange? Why did Jesus not lead the man in a simple sinner’s prayer? We’ll find out why in today’s lesson.



ILLUSTRATE

**MINT CONDITION**

Is an expression used to describe the condition of collectible items (action figures, dolls, toys, stamps, records, or comic books, etc.). Bring in one of these collectible items and talk with the children about how their condition affects their value: each defect lowers the item’s value. However, this is not the way it works with sin. Even just one sin renders us totally unacceptable to God (Jas 2:10).

**EXTREME OPPOSITES**

The Apostle Paul saw what the young man did not. Paul was very much like this young man, having every reason to boast in the flesh (Phil 3:4), but God opened Paul’s eyes to see that his own goodness was worthless (3:7). He did not trust in his own righteousness, but in the righteousness of God that comes through faith in Christ (3:9).



APPLY

**SUNDAR SINGH, PART 2**

On another of Sundar Singh’s travels, he came across another Hindu sadhu. His feet were tied with a rope, and he was hanging upside down from the branch of a tree. Sundar asked, “Why do you do this? What is the purpose of such torture?” “People are very surprised to see me hanging head down from a tree, but this is my method to serve God and do penance. When I am hanging upside down, I remind myself and others that all of us are bound by sin and lead lives that are, in God’s eyes, upside down. I seek to turn myself upside down again and again until in the end I stand upright in the sight of God,” the sadhu explained. Once again, Sundar struggled with the Hindu idea of penance. “It is true,” he said, “that the world is upside down and its ways are sinful. But I ask you this: Can we ever hope to right ourselves through our own strength? Must we not turn instead to God, who alone can set right what is wrong and free us from evil thoughts and desires?” Story from *Sundar Singh: Footprints over the Mountains*.



## LESSON 17

*Jesus teaches the parable of the equal wages*

MATTHEW 19:27-20:16



**All believers will enjoy the full blessings of eternal life.**



***“So the last will be first, and the first last”***  
(Matt 20:16).

## Supporting Truths

1. The reward is great.
2. The reward is equal for all believers.
3. The reward is fair.
4. The reward is more than fair—it is far beyond what anyone deserves.
5. The reward stops Christians from comparing and competing.

## Objectives

1. Define eternal life.
2. Explain what “the first shall be last and the last shall be first” means.
3. Retell the parable.
4. Explain why the vineyard owner paid workers more than they deserved.
5. Explain why no Christian is in a position to boast about eternal life.



*Jesus teaches the parable of the equal wages • Matthew 19:27–20:16*

## Lesson Summary

After the rich young ruler left, the disciples wondered what reward they would get for leaving everything to follow Jesus. Jesus assured them that they would get eternal life, a prize far greater than anything they had given up. But Jesus also corrected them for thinking that they were special for having sacrificed so much. The story of the vineyard shows that all believers will enjoy the full blessings of eternal life, because the reward God gives is not something we deserve.

## Spotlight on the Gospel

Salvation is not fair. No one deserves eternal life. Because of our sin, we all deserve death—both physical and spiritual death. But God, because of the richness of His grace, graciously gives eternal life to all those who trust Christ. In Christ, we are spared the punishment our sins deserve, and in Christ we receive the righteousness we could never earn. If we are jealous about God's grace in salvation, then we do not truly understand God's generosity in saving anyone at all.

LAST WEEK



**Jesus confronts the rich young ruler**  
*Matthew 19:16–26*

THIS WEEK



**Jesus teaches the parable of the equal wages**  
*Matthew 19:27–20:16*

NEXT WEEK



**Jesus enters Jerusalem**  
*Luke 19:28–44*

## Lesson Commentary

*All believers will enjoy the full blessings of eternal life.*

The rich young ruler had just made two huge mistakes. First, he thought eternal life was something he could earn (Matt 19:16). He thought he was better than others, so he chose to depend on himself instead of on Jesus (19:20). Second, he was unwilling to give Jesus first place in his life. He clung to his earthly possessions, refusing to forsake them in order to follow Christ (19:21–22). Unlike this man, the disciples had left everything to follow Jesus (19:27). Yet they, as events would soon prove (20:20–21, 24), were still fixated on their own personal rewards and status in Christ's kingdom. Jesus told them a parable to remind them that salvation is God's free gift. It is not deserved or earned. It is given freely and equally to all who trust in God's Son.

### Jesus encourages: the prize is worth the cost (19:27–29)

It is not wrong to wonder if the Christian life is worth it (19:27). Jesus Himself urged the disciples to accept the cost because His glory in the kingdom would be worth it (16:25–27). Jesus encouraged the disciples that the prize would be far greater than what they had given up. They would enter the “*new world*,” literally, the “regeneration,” the universe recreated to be new, perfect, and glorious (19:28). The prophets looked forward to this (Isa 65:17; 66:22), and the disciples would cling to this hope for the rest of their lives (Acts 3:21; 2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1).

But when Jesus said that they would rule over the twelve tribes of Israel, is Jesus saying that the disciples would get a better prize than other believers for their extra special effort? No, for every believer will rule with Christ in the new world (Rev 3:21; 22:5). And the ruling is not the main point anyway, since ruling is simply serving (Luke 22:26). It is ruling with Christ that is so special, and every believer gets that prize. Instead of thinking they should get something better than others, the disciples should have been astonished: the reward is so massive it makes the greatest sacrifice look like no sacrifice at all. That is

what is meant by “a hundredfold” (Matt 19:29). This does not mean you will get exactly 100 times what you gave up. It means that the prize will go far beyond what anyone deserves.

This prize begins even now (Mark 10:30). As believers join the family of God, they gain countless brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, and children, united by a common devotion to Christ. As they voluntarily share their possessions, they gain houses and lands to use for the goal they all have in common—“for my name's sake” (Matt 19:29). In fact, as they die to themselves and are united with Christ (Gal 2:20), they begin eternal life even now (John 17:3). But all this is still just a tiny taste of the real prize to come: eternal life. Jesus mentioned “eternal life” last because He saved the best for last. **Eternal life is being with Jesus forever.** Jesus is saying to Peter and the others, “Is it worth it? Of course it's worth it! The prize of being with Me forever is far better than you can ever imagine.”

#### THINK ABOUT IT

Is Jesus worth it to you? If not, seek to know Him for how great He really is.



### Jesus corrects: the prize is not something earned (19:30–20:16)

But there's a problem with Peter's question. To the disciples, it seemed that the trouble was mostly past and the kingdom was about to come. They wondered: if that rich man could have gotten heavenly treasure for following Jesus now, right at the end, won't we get even better treasure for following Him through thick and thin these last three years? They were calculating their reward as if God owed them something.

Jesus restates His point: the first will be last and the last will be first (Matt 19:30). In other words, everyone will finish the same. Our prideful hearts think, “That's not fair! I should get more for all I've done!” Jesus uses a simple story to explain what reward in the kingdom is like (20:1). It is like a landowner hiring workers for his vineyard. Vines were common in the hills of Israel, and about September there was a short period of time to harvest the grapes before the winter rains. Landowners needed more help than usual at that time. They would hire day-laborers, people who

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus teaches the parable of the equal wages • Matthew 19:27–20:16



did not have a guaranteed job. These workers needed to find work each day in order to buy food for themselves and their families.

Harvesting vineyards was hard work. It is hot in September, and this day in particular was a scorcher (20:12), a day when wind blew in heat from the eastern desert. Also, the



## THINK ABOUT IT

Everyone who follows Jesus to the end gets this same prize.

work day was long, from 6 AM to 6 PM. Even so, when the owner went out, he found workers ready (20:2). They agreed to work all day for a denarius, which was the normal pay for a day's work. Then the story gets interesting. The owner got more workers at 9 AM, at noon, at 3 PM, and finally at 5 PM. These workers were in no position to discuss their wage, since they had no other work. They could only be thankful for the job and trust that the owner would pay a fair price (20:4).

Imagine the surprise of the last workers to receive a whole denarius! They had only worked one hour, yet they were paid the price for twelve hours (20:9)! When the first workers saw this, they began calculating: if one hour earned one denarius, then they could expect a whopping twelve denarii for their twelve hours of work. How disappointed they were when they also received exactly one denarius (20:11–12)!



## THINK ABOUT IT

No believer is more saved than another.

generosity. In fact, even the first group of workers should have been thankful, for the owner came and found them when they had nothing. When they “begrudge” his “generosity” (20:15), they are literally looking with a “bad” eye upon his “goodness.”

The owner's wages were fair (20:13), but also equal (20:14) and generous (20:15). He chose to pay not just what the workers had earned, but more according to His own gen-

And that is Jesus' point. A disciple who serves Christ while calculating what God owes him has a bad eye. He is looking at the whole thing the wrong way. He should not want what is fair (Rom 6:23a). God is fair, for He keeps His promises. But God is generous on top of being fair. He rewards all who follow Jesus, not according to what we deserve, but according to the riches of His grace (Eph 1:7). There will be no difference between first and last (Matt 20:16), for the reward is not really a reward at all. It is *grace*. It is a *gift*. It is *unearned*.

But what about the reward Jesus promises His saints at His coming? These are not about getting extra prizes in heaven, as if Christians were competing with each other

to get the biggest pile of jewels. Rather, most of these promises—including the crown of life, righteousness, and glory—are promises of salvation itself (1 Cor 9:25; 2 Tim 4:8; Jas 1:12; 1 Pet 5:4; Rev 22:12). Still, there are some promises of greater or lesser reward (1 Cor 3:14), but the reward here is that we will share in God's joy over the work we have done for Him (4:5; Matt 25:21). He delights in every true believer, but the more faithfully we serve Him, the more He is pleased and the more we rejoice in His pleasure. He will reward every believer with His praise, but there may be varying degrees of praise. This is what Jesus is telling the disciples: do not be envious for some special reward besides God Himself. If you love Him, His greater delight will be your greater reward. Do not calculate, compete, and compare, but instead follow Jesus with joy forever, no matter the cost. Whether you came to Jesus early or late, you will one day receive the greatest joy imaginable: living with Jesus forever.

## THINK ABOUT IT

God is more than fair.



# Lesson Outline

*All believers will enjoy the full blessings of eternal life.*



## AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Follow Jesus because the reward is great (19:27–29).
2. Stop being jealous because the reward is equal and generous (19:30–20:16).



## AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Jesus encourages: the prize is worth the cost (19:27–29).
  - Peter asked if his prize was worth his sacrifice (19:27).
  - The twelve will have a specific job in the kingdom (19:28).
  - The real prize is generous and given to all believers (19:29).
2. Jesus corrects: the prize is not something earned (19:30–20:16).
  - The first and the last all receive the same prize (19:30).
  - Some come first and do more work (20:1–7).
  - Some come last and do less work (20:8–10).
  - The reward is fair, equal, and generous (20:11–16).





## Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



### Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. What did Peter ask Jesus?**  
What do we get for leaving everything to follow you?
- 2. What is the prize believers get?**  
Eternal life—living forever with Jesus.
- 3. Did the workers all work the same? Did they get paid the same?**  
No. Yes.
- 4. Was the owner fair? Was he generous?**  
Yes. The owner was both fair and generous.



### Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. Why did Peter ask about the reward?**  
He heard Jesus promise the rich man a reward, and Peter wondered if he and the other disciples would get an extra special reward for following Jesus from the beginning.
- 2. What will the disciples do in the new world?**  
They will reign with Jesus over the nation of Israel.
- 3. Will the reward be worth everything they gave up?**  
It will be worth far, far more—like getting 100 times more.
- 4. What does it mean for the first to be last and the last to be first?**  
It means that all finish the same. There is no difference between one who comes to Jesus sooner and serves longer and one who comes later and serves shorter.
- 5. What is the parable of the vineyard owner about?**  
It is about the kingdom of heaven. It is about how God (the vineyard owner) rewards His workers (followers of Jesus) in the new world.
- 6. Why were the workers in the first group upset?**  
They worked more than the others, but they got paid the same.
- 7. Did they have a right to be upset?**  
No. They got what the owner promised. Also, the owner came and found them when they had nothing.
- 8. So how will God reward everyone who follows Jesus**  
He will reward them fairly (as promised), equally, and generously—eternal life is more valuable than anyone deserves.

# Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

## THE FIRST LAST AND THE LAST FIRST

As the children come into class, give them different jobs to do. Assign both jobs that will take a long time and jobs that will take less time. After the jobs are complete, give each child a small treat as a thank-you for their work. Some children may be upset that they all receive the same treat even though some of them worked much longer than others. During your lesson you will be able to use this pre-lesson exercise to help the children understand why the laborers who worked all day were angry that they received the same wage as those who only worked for one hour.

## WHAT'S A DENARIUS?

Bring a dollar bill into class. Ask the children what it is that you are holding. Ask them how many dollar bills someone is paid for working a whole day. Tell them how many dollar bills an entry-level worker makes in your city for a full day's work. Explain that when Jesus was alive they did not use dollar bills but they used denarii to buy things. In Jesus' day, one denarius equaled a full day's wage.



ILLUSTRATE

## PHEW, THIS IS HARD WORK

Younger children may not immediately relate to the hard work of the laborers. Ask the children to list some things that are hard for them or which they do not enjoy doing. Do they ever get a reward for doing these jobs? What is their favorite reward? How would they feel if, after having worked hard on something, their parents gave both them and their sibling the same reward even though their sibling had just been playing the whole time? Continue with the parable, making the connection to God's undeserved blessing of salvation.

## A DAY'S WAGES

Divide a vertical line into twelve evenly spaced sections. These represent the twelve hours in a Jewish workday. During the lesson, tape a man at the bottom of the line to represent the first group of laborers who started working early in the morning. Then tape other men above it, corresponding to the time they began working (third hour, sixth hour, etc.). At the end of the lesson, have the children count with you how many hours each group worked. What did the land owner pay each group? Use this activity to show God's generosity in salvation.



APPLY

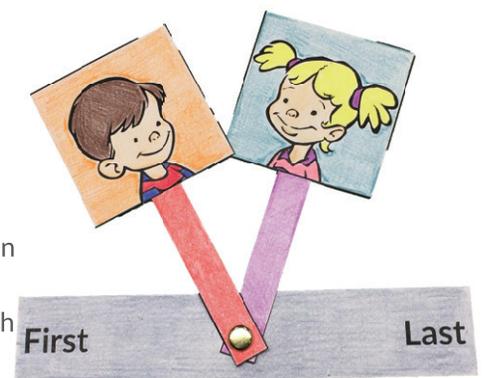
## FIRST AND LAST

See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1.

**Materials:** Craft sheets, scissors, cardstock, crayons, brad, scissors.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color every image and cut them. Fix the extremity of the "boy" and "girl" to the base with a brad.

*First and Last*  
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1



# TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus teaches the parable of the equal wages • Matthew 19:27–20:16



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

## EQUAL REWARDS

Scatter numerous small objects around the room. Tell the children to collect as many as possible. Those who find ten or more objects will get a prize. After the objects have been found, sort the children into three groups: those with ten or more, those with five to nine, and those with less than five. Give each group the same prize. See how those who collected ten or more react. If they react like the disciples, wishing for a greater prize, explain that the story today will challenge that attitude. If they are happy with their prize, commend them.

## ALL FALL SHORT

Tape a piece of candy high on the ceiling where no one can come close to reaching it. Explain that if any child can jump and touch it that the whole class will get a piece of candy. After all the children try and fail, give each child a piece of candy. Point out the child that got closest to the candy. Was it fair that everyone received the same candy, even though some children jumped higher than others? Yes. It was more than fair. Everyone failed, but because of the teacher's generosity, all received candy.



ILLUSTRATE

## IS IT FAIR?

There were two brothers who failed to clean their room. Their mother instructed the older brother to clean up the room. When he was almost finished, the younger brother came in and helped him finish up. Their mom was so pleased that she gave the older brother a special toy. The younger brother immediately got excited because he helped clean the room and so expected a toy. Should both brothers get the same reward or not? In today's lesson, Jesus taught that those who are saved later in life will receive the same reward of salvation as those who faithfully served God much of their lives.

## BIRTHDAY TREAT

Pretend it is your birthday. Bring in a birthday treat to share with half the class. If the children begin to complain about not receiving a birthday treat, ask them if they deserve one. Is it their birthday? Just because you chose to share your treat with some does not mean you have to share your treat with everyone. Since it is your birthday, you are the only one who deserves a treat.



APPLY

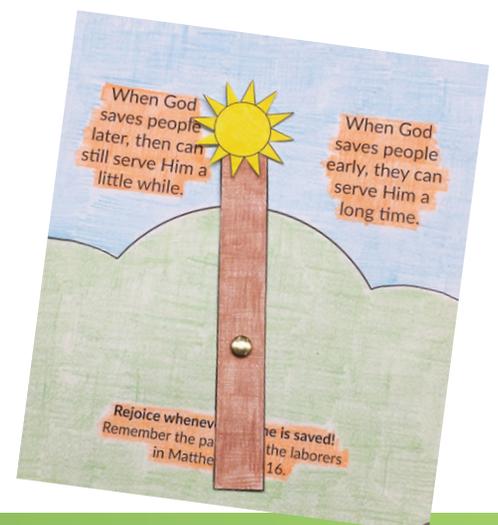
## GOD SAVES EARLY AND LATER

See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1.

**Materials:** Craft sheets, cardstock, crayons, brad, glue stick.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color it with crayons. Glue the sun on the long strip, fix it to the craft page with a brad.

God Saves Early and Later  
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1



AGES 9–11



### EQUAL REWARDS

Have the children compete in a predetermined challenge. After congratulating the winner, give the rest of the class the same reward. In today's lesson, Jesus ends the parable by telling His disciples that the last will be first and the first will be last. What Jesus wanted His disciples to understand was that He sees all who respond obediently to His call of repentance as being equal.

### CANCELLED TEST

Ask the children to imagine the following scenario: They studied diligently all week for a test only to have it cancelled and each student given an A+ on the exam. How would they feel? Would they be angry with the teacher for giving everyone the same grade, even those who did not prepare for the test? In today's lesson, we will hear a parable about a similar situation involving five groups of workers in a vineyard.



### THIEF ON THE CROSS

The penitent thief (Luke 23:39–43) received the same salvation as the apostles. He was a criminal, and was justly punished for his crime, but he received the same reward as the disciples who were unjustly persecuted for their faithfulness to Christ. The dying thief had very little time to serve God, but the disciples served Jesus for the remainder of their lives. Yet both received the full blessings of eternal life.

### SOVEREIGN

Tell the children that you will be giving out candy during the lesson, but give candy to only a fourth of the class. When the children who did not receive candy become disappointed, ask them to remind you who the candy belongs to. Explain that you are sovereign over the candy. You own it and you have the right to give it (or not give it) to whoever you want. In today's lesson, the landowner owned both the vineyard and the money which he used to pay his laborers. Since it was his to give, the landowner was completely justified in giving all the laborers the same amount of pay.



### HUDSON TAYLOR

Near the end of his life, Hudson Taylor said, "I've never made a sacrifice." Yet most of us would say he made incredible sacrifices. He spent his whole life as a missionary to China. He had suffered criticism from many. He suffered poor health most of his life. He lost a wife and four children. What did he mean that he had never made a sacrifice? He saw Jesus so clearly, and how desirable Jesus is, that nothing else could compare. Nothing seemed like a sacrifice compared to the joy of living with Jesus forever.



## LESSON 18

### *Jesus enters Jerusalem*

LUKE 19:28-44



**Jesus is God's King.**



***“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Luke 19:38).***

## Supporting Truths

1. Jesus is King.
2. Jesus is the promised King.
3. Jesus came as King to die.
4. Jesus is the King of peace.
5. Those who reject the King will suffer.

## Objectives

1. Recite Luke 19:38.
2. Connect the donkey to Zechariah 9:9 and the people's praise to Psalm 118:26.
3. Explain why Jesus revealed Himself as King at this time.
4. List the things that make for peace.
5. Tell how Jesus' prophecy came true.



## Lesson Summary

Until now, Jesus did not openly claim to be the promised King. But now He did. He knew the religious leaders would reject Him, and He knew the cheering crowds would make the leaders want to execute Him quickly. Jesus wept, knowing how much the Jews would suffer for rejecting Him. But He entered as King anyway, according to the Father's plan. He entered Jerusalem on the day that families chose their Passover lamb, and soon after, He died as the great Passover Lamb.

## Spotlight on the Gospel

The gospel is about Jesus bringing peace. He is the King who will crush everything that is evil and rule over a perfect world. But to do that, He had to die to pay sin's penalty and satisfy the Father's wrath. He accomplished that mission, and now He offers peace and salvation to all. But each person must come to Him on His terms. All those who reject Him, or reject His terms, will face terrible judgment.

LAST WEEK



Jesus teaches the parable of the equal wages  
*Matthew 19:27-20:16*

THIS WEEK



Jesus enters Jerusalem  
*Luke 19:28-44*

NEXT WEEK



Jesus teaches the parable of landowner  
*Mark 12:1-12*

# Lesson Commentary

## *Jesus is God's King.*

Jesus had kept quiet about His kingship. He did not allow the Galileans to crown Him (John 6:14–15) or His disciples to tell who He really was (Luke 9:21, 36). But now Jesus publically presented Himself as the promised King (19:28–44). And He did this in Jerusalem, where perhaps more than two million Jews had gathered for Passover. In order to die at just the right time, Jesus openly presented Himself as King.

### Jesus planned to enter as King (19:28–34)

Jesus planned the timing of His entrance. He had recently traveled south from Galilee (Mark 10:1), but He still waited for just the right time. After confronting the rich young ruler (Matt 19:16–26), healing two blind men (20:29–34), and raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11), Jesus stayed away from the murderous Pharisees and eager crowds (11:53–56). But now He made Himself known in Bethany (12:9), just in time to be the final Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7). His entrance into Jerusalem fits the timing of Daniel's prophecy (Dan 9:26), and it came on the day when families brought Passover lambs into their homes (Exod 12:3).

Jesus also planned the details of His entrance. He sent two disciples to get a donkey, and everything happened exactly as Jesus said. But why a donkey? Over 500 years

earlier, Zechariah prophesied: "Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zech 9:9; John 12:15). This also recalls Jacob's prophecy 1,000 years before Zechariah: a ruler would come from the tribe of Judah, "binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine" (Gen 49:10–11). By choosing a donkey colt that had never been ridden (Luke 19:30), Jesus was publically identifying Himself as the *Messiah*, the promised King

who would bring Israel prosperity and peace from its enemies (Gen 49:10–12; Zech 9:9–17).

### Jesus entered as King (19:35–38)

No wonder there was a huge crowd! The people were celebrating the coronation of their Messiah (cf. 1 Kgs 1:33–34). Jesus' followers began the celebration. They spread their robes before Jesus (Luke 19:36), showing their submission to Him as king (cf. 2 Kgs 9:13). Imagine people pointing to Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46–52), Lazarus (John 12:9, 11), and others traveling with Him, marveling at the amazing things Jesus had done (Luke 19:37).

As Jesus rode from Bethany, He crested the ridge called the Mount of Olives (19:37). What a sight it would have been! Looking straight ahead across the Kidron Valley, Jesus and His followers would have seen the temple mount with its gleaming white limestone, and perched on top, Herod's magnificent temple, flashing gold in the sun. On the other side, people on the temple mount would have heard the shouts of praise and looked across to see the crowd streaming down the ridge. So as the crowd of followers flowed down the Mount of Olives, another crowd poured out of Jerusalem's eastern gate to meet them (John 12:12). They brought palm branches with them, another symbol to honor a victorious king (12:13).

They welcomed Him as their Messiah (Luke 19:38; Ps 118:26). They called Him "King" and recited Psalm 118, the last song sung at Passover, for they believed the time of their redemption had come. They cried out, "*Hosanna!*" which means "Save!, a celebration of God's salvation" (John 12:13). They welcomed Jesus "in the name of the Lord," as God's king, coming with God's full authority. They said "Peace in heaven," for they believed God could be at rest only now that Jerusalem, His chosen city, was about to have rest (Luke 19:38).

### Jesus was rejected as King (19:39–40)

This celebration was exactly what the Pharisees had been afraid of after Jesus caused such a stir over



#### THINK ABOUT IT

Jesus was in control even over the time of His death.

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus enters Jerusalem • Luke 19:28–44



## THINK ABOUT IT

Jesus knew the leaders of the Jews would reject Him (Luke 18:32; 19:14).

(11:53, 57), but now that they had found Him, they could not because of the cheering crowds. All they could do was beg Jesus to stop them (Luke 19:39). J

Jesus refused (19:40), for two reasons. First, His disciples were right to honor Him, for He really was the Messiah, as even nature knows (Isa 55:12). Second, Jesus was prodding the Pharisees to kill Him. Jesus arranged His own death. When Jesus said, “The very stones would cry out,” He recalled Habakkuk’s condemnation of Babylon. Babylon had built their houses from the spoil of people they had brutally conquered, so “the stone [cried] out from the wall” as a witness against them (Hab 2:11).



## THINK ABOUT IT

Jesus arranged His own death.

Likewise, the stones of Jerusalem would cry out against the Jews as a witness that they had unjustly killed their King.

## Jesus declared judgment as King (19:41–44)

While the crowd celebrated, Jesus wept (Luke 19:41). He had wept before at Lazarus’ tomb (John 11:35), but the word here is much stronger: He heaved with great sobs of sorrow. He knew that the prophecies about the Messiah coming on a donkey hinted at great pain before peace. The peace Zechariah foretold would come by “the blood of my covenant” (Zech 9:11; Luke 22:20; Heb 9:11–27). The wine that Jacob spoke of to represent prosperity (Gen 49:11) would first represent judgment. God would stain His garments red in the winepress of His anger (Isa 63:2–3), for the Jews would reject their day of redemption (63:4, 10).

They would reject Jesus because they did not know what would bring peace (Luke 19:42). Most in the crowd were no different than those who tried to make Jesus king in Galilee (John 6:14). They wanted food and freedom, but they missed the requirement for real peace: soft hearts (Ps 95:7–8), confession of sin (Ps 32:6), repentance (Ezek 18:31–32), seeking the Lord (Isa 55:6), and obedience (Isa 48:18). They did not realize that this was the “time of your **visitation**” (Luke 19:44), that Zechariah’s prophecy was about the LORD Himself appearing (Zech 9:14). Jesus was in the world, but the world did not know Him (John 1:10).

## THINK ABOUT IT

Jesus came to His own people, but they did not receive Him (John 1:11).



Instead of salvation (Zech 9:16), God’s presence would bring severe judgment. About forty years later, in AD 70, Jesus’ prediction came true (Luke 19:43–44). The Romans built siege walls around Jerusalem, then they broke in and crushed the city and its people (19:44). The siege was horrible, with starvation leading even to cannibalism. And the slaughter that followed was worse. To prevent Jerusalem from rebelling again, the Romans tumbled the temple stones into the valleys surrounding the temple mount, and any walls left standing were finally leveled after one last rebellion sixty-five years later. As Jesus said, when the crowd stopped praising Him, the stones cried out in judgment.

Yet Jesus wept for Jerusalem because His love is faithful. One day Israel will repent and welcome their Messiah (Matt 23:39; Luke 21:24). When they finally find peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 5:1), all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26). Yet even that salvation will come through heart-wrenching grief, when Israel realizes what they have done to their Messiah (Zech 12:10) and how many millions of their people have perished as a result. Take this warning to heart: do not reject your King who came to save you.

# Lesson Outline

*Jesus is God's King.*



## AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Jesus is King (19:28–35).
2. Rejoice and worship Jesus as King (19:36–38).
3. Do not reject Jesus as King (19:39–44).



## AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Jesus planned to enter as King (19:28–34).
  - Jesus sent the disciples to get a donkey colt (19:28–31).
  - His disciples did what He said (19:32–34).
2. Jesus entered as King (19:35–38).
  - Jesus rode the donkey over the disciples' robes (19:35–36).
  - The crowd celebrated Him as the promised King (19:37–38).
3. Jesus was rejected as King (19:39–40).
  - The Pharisees wanted Him to stop His disciples (19:39).
  - Jesus refused because He deserved their praise (19:40).
4. Jesus declared judgment as King (19:41–44).
  - Jesus wept because Jerusalem had rejected peace (19:41–42).
  - Jesus declared judgment because they had rejected God (19:43–44).





## Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



### Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **What did Jesus ride on?**  
A donkey colt.
2. **What did Jesus' followers call Him?**  
King.
3. **What did the religious leaders ask Jesus to do?**  
They wanted Him to make His followers stop calling Him king.
4. **What did Jesus do while the crowd rejoiced?**  
Jesus wept.



### Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **Why did Jesus publically claim to be the promised king?**  
He did this so that He would be rejected and killed at just the right time.
2. **Why was His entrance at just the right time?**  
It was the time prophesied by Daniel (Dan 9:26), and it was the day the Passover lambs came into families' homes (Exod 12:3).
3. **Why did Jesus choose to ride a donkey colt?**  
To show that He was the Messiah Zechariah prophesied about (Zech 9:9).
4. **Why were there so many people to celebrate Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem?**  
Perhaps over 2 million were in Jerusalem for Passover, and Jesus had recently raised Lazarus from the dead in order to draw attention to Himself for this special time.
5. **Besides calling Him King, how else did the crowds welcome Jesus as the Messiah?**  
They showed honor and submission by laying their robes on the road under Him. They quoted Psalm 118:26 about the Messiah. They said "Hosanna," celebrating salvation. And they brought palm branches, a sign of honor for a victorious king.
6. **What did Jesus say would happen when the people stopped praising Him?**  
The rocks would cry out, judging them for not accepting their King.
7. **Why did Jesus weep?**  
Jesus knew that the Jews, and especially Jerusalem, were about to suffer greatly.
8. **Why were the Jews going to have pain instead of peace?**  
The leaders rejected Him, and even the crowds did not know what would bring peace: soft hearts, confession of sin, repentance, seeking God, and obedience.

# Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

## FIND THE RIDE

Before today's lesson, cut a piece of cardstock into the shape of a donkey. Hide it somewhere in the classroom. Divide the class into two teams and have them look for the donkey. The team that finds the donkey first wins. After playing several times, introduce the children to the donkey in today's lesson. Jesus sent two of His disciples into the village of Bethpage where they would find a donkey for Him to ride into Jerusalem.

## JUST THE RIGHT TIME

Begin counting down from ten to one, encouraging the children to count down with you. When you get to zero, immediately begin the lesson. Tell the children that Jesus publicly presented Himself as the promised King at just the right time, just in time to be the final Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7).



ILLUSTRATE

## WELCOMING THE KING

Act out the things people did to welcome Jesus as king. Divide the kids into six groups to help make each of the six things more distinct and memorable. Group 1 puts robes (or jackets) on the ground. Group 2 waves branches. Group 3 says, "Hosanna!" Group 4 says, "Blessed is the King!" Group 5 says, "Blessed is the One who comes the name of the Lord!" Group 6 says, "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" (Actions found in Luke 19:36, 38; John 12:13).

## CAN YOU HEAR IT?

In a parade, we often focus on all the sights, but what about the sounds? Divide the class into different groups, each having their own sound to make: the clip-clop of a donkey, the swoosh of palm branches, the clapping of hands, the shouting of praises, and the murmuring of the Pharisees. As you retell the story, allow each group to participate by making their sound at the appropriate time.



APPLY

## PALM BRANCH

See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*.

**Materials:** Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, glue stick, scissors.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color every image and cut them. Glue "Hosanna" on the palm branch.

*Palm Branch*  
See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*



# TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus enters Jerusalem • Luke 19:28–44



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

## JOY AND SORROW

Has anyone had a really fun birthday party recently? What was it like? Who came? What did you do? Were people happy? Was there celebration? While everyone else was happy, were you happy or sad? Happy! But something strange happens during the celebration in today's lesson. Huge crowds are celebrating, but Jesus is crying. Let's find out why some people are celebrating and Jesus is so sad.

## TIMER SET

Jesus publicly presented Himself as the promised King at just the right time. After confronting the rich young ruler (Matt 19:16–26), healing two blind men (20:29–34), and raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11), Jesus stayed away from the murderous Pharisees and eager crowds (11:53–56). But now He made Himself known in Bethany (12:9), just in time to be the final Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7). Set a kitchen timer for a small amount of time and place it in front of the children. Remain silent until the timer goes off. As soon as the timer goes off, begin your lesson, noting that it was just the right time to begin.



ILLUSTRATE

## SYMBOLS OF JOY

Show the class some confetti, rice, and bubbles. Ask them what all three have in common. Tell the class that throwing confetti at a party or throwing rice or blowing bubbles at a wedding are all traditional American symbols of rejoicing. In our lesson today, the people welcome Jesus with Palm branches to show their joy and fervent hope that the Messiah had come.

## WHY A DONKEY?

Show the children a picture or video clip of a presidential motorcade without telling them what it is. Ask them who's being transported by this group of vehicles (the president or some other important person). How do they know this? This type of caravan signifies that someone important is along for the ride. That's why Jesus chose to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey—it showed that He was the Messiah prophesied by Zechariah (Zech 9:9). When the people saw Jesus on a donkey, they knew their King was coming to them.



APPLY

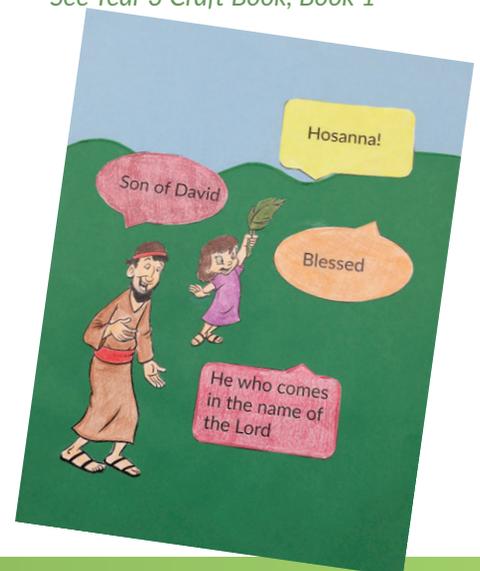
## PRAISING CROWD

See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*.

**Materials:** Craft sheets, green construction paper, light blue copy paper, crayons, glue stick.

**Directions:** Color the images with crayons. Cut the green construction paper to have the landscape, and gluer it to the light blue copy paper. Glue the images on the paper and put in order what the crowd said.

Praising Crowd  
See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

### TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Has anyone ever been to a victory parade for a sports team that has just won a championship? Fans line the streets, hoping to catch a glimpse of the players and trophy as they ride by on the back of a flatbed truck or bus. As the players pass by, fans cheer, sing, wave, and throw confetti. This is similar to how the people rejoiced at Jesus' arrival in today's lesson: the people received Him as a conqueror, a victor, and their savior.

### THE JOY OF VICTORY AND THE AGONY OF DEFEAT

After a competitive championship game, it's common to see the joy of victory and the agony of defeat on display side by side. While the winning team and its fans are celebrating one of the most exciting moments of their lives, the losing team and its fans are suffering through one of the most saddening moments in their lives. Something similar happens in today's lesson: While huge crowds are celebrating, Jesus is weeping. Today's lesson will tell us why.



ILLUSTRATE

### CHANGE OF PLANS

Have your parents ever planned something special for you, but then you were so disobedient that they canceled their plans? Your parents were excited for you to have a good time, but you did not have the right attitude to enjoy the good things they had planned. That's how it was with the people in Jerusalem: God had plans for peace, but peace only comes to hearts prepared to receive His peace. What kind of heart is that?

### THE RETURN OF THE KING

During His triumphal entry, Jesus came humbly. However, when the King returns, He will come in power. Read Revelation 19:11–16, noting the differences in Jesus' triumphal return: (1) comes from heaven (19:11), (2) rides a warhorse (19:11), (3) makes war (19:11), (4) wears many crowns (19:12), (5) wears a robe (19:13), (6) armies of heaven follow (19:14), (7) strikes down the nations (19:15), (8) "King of kings and Lord of lords" written on robe and thigh (19:16).



APPLY

### ACTIONS LOUDER THAN WORDS

Before a week had passed, the crowds were calling for the crucifixion of Christ (Matt 27:15–23). Their voice of praise had turned into a vote for destruction. Their shouts of Hosanna had turned into shouts of hatred. While the masses were eager to be delivered from Rome, they were not willing to be delivered from their sins. When they had to choose, they chose the insurrectionist Barabbas over the lowly Jesus. The people were willing to lend their lips to Jesus but not their lives. How about you? Do you praise Jesus with your lips but deny Him with your actions? If Jesus is your King, then He must be King over every area of your life.



## LESSON 19

*Jesus teaches the parable of landowner*

MARK 12:1-12



**People who reject Jesus' authority will be destroyed.**



***"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone" (Mark 12:10).***

## Supporting Truths

1. People who do not let Jesus be in charge will be destroyed.
2. Jesus has authority from God because He is the Son of God.
3. Jesus has authority from God because He is the cornerstone chosen by God.
4. God expects the fruit of righteousness.
5. Jesus will win no matter what.

## Objectives

1. Retell the parable of the vineyard.
2. Explain the authority of an heir.
3. Describe a cornerstone and define "providence."
4. Compare Mark 12:1-7 to Isaiah 5:1-7.
5. Explain how Jesus won through the resurrection.

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus teaches the parable of landowner • Mark 12:1-12



## Lesson Summary

The religious leaders questioned Jesus' authority. Yet because they were trying to trap Him, Jesus would not plainly tell them where His authority came from. Instead, He used the parable of the vineyard and the prophecy of the cornerstone to show them. Both of these proved that His authority came from God and that the religious leaders had no right to resist. Even so, they still rejected Him, and consequently they would be completely destroyed.

## Spotlight on the Gospel

Every person faces the same choice as the religious leaders. Like the tenants in the parable, you can live for yourself, ignore God, and refuse to accept Jesus. But no matter how much you deny Him, you cannot defeat Him. Or you can let Jesus be in charge. You can build your life on Him as your strong foundation and put your hope in His risen life. As you do, you will live for God and enjoy the blessing of living in His kingdom.

LAST WEEK



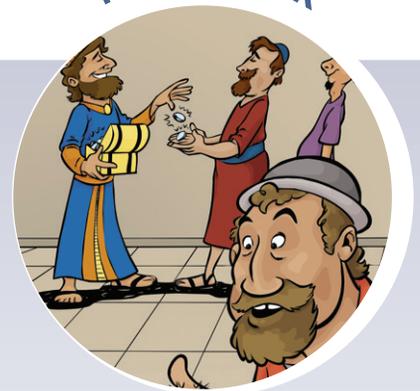
Jesus enters Jerusalem  
*Luke 19:28-44*

THIS WEEK



Jesus teaches the  
parable of landowner  
*Mark 12:1-12*

NEXT WEEK



Jesus teaches the  
parable of the talents  
*Matthew 25:14-30*

THE PASSION WEEK OF JESUS

# Lesson Commentary

## *People who reject Jesus' authority will be destroyed.*

Two days before this parable, Jesus had entered Jerusalem publicly as the promised King in order to provoke His enemies to kill Him. But instead of bowing before Him, the religious leaders questioned His **authority**, His *right to be in charge* (11:28). Because of their rebellion, they did not deserve an answer (11:29–33). Even so, Jesus used a parable and a prophecy to reveal His authority and to warn that everyone who rejects His authority will be utterly destroyed.

### Jesus used a parable to condemn the religious leaders (12:1–9)

At first, the parable was ordinary and familiar to Jesus' hearers. They would have known the hard work involved in planting a vineyard (12:1). Vineyards were planted on rocky slopes. First, the rocks were moved and retaining walls built to create flat terraces where vines could be planted. Next, bedrock was carved out to make a winepress, where grapes would be stepped on with bare feet and the juice would flow downhill to be collected in storage jars. Finally, a stone wall and a watchtower protected the vineyard, since vineyards are valuable but also fragile. Then,

even after all this was done, the owner had to wait four or five years before the vines grew and produced the first good grape harvest. The vineyard owner had worked hard on this vineyard, and he

deserved to benefit from it.

Including tenants in the story was also not unusual. Most of the land at that time was owned by the wealthier class, who often lived elsewhere while the poorer class worked as tenant farmers. In return for their work, the farmers would keep most of the wine from the vineyard, while they would pay a portion of the wine to the owner as rent (12:2). As might be expected, there were sometimes squabbles between tenants and owners.

But the conflict in Jesus' parable is quite unusual. Instead of paying any rent, the tenants beat the first slave, bashed the second slave in the head, and killed the third slave (12:3–5). Strangely, the owner kept sending more slaves, but with the same results (12:5). Even more strange, the owner sent his son (12:6). The tenants, perhaps thinking that the owner had died or would never come back, decided to kill the son (12:7). If the heir died, and no owner came to claim the land, the land would belong to whoever was occupying it. In a final act of defiance, the tenants not only killed the son, but they dishonored him by throwing him out of the vineyard without a proper burial (12:8).

What does this parable mean? Jesus' description of the vineyard comes from Isaiah 5:1–7, which compares

Israel to a vineyard. God had chosen, rescued, guided, taught, protected, and cared for Israel, and He expected Israel to bear the fruit of righteousness. When they did not, God was patient and gracious like the vineyard owner, sending prophets over and over again to urge righteousness (Jer 7:25). But like the tenants, Israel's leaders persecuted and killed the prophets (Jer 26:20–23; 2 Chr 24:20–22; Mark 11:29–33). And now they were rejecting the "**beloved son**," Jesus (Mark 12:6; 1:11; 9:7), *the heir and therefore the true owner of Israel*.

The religious leaders understood Jesus' story. They were rightly indignant at the tenants (Matt 21:41), but when they realized this parable was about them, they did not repent (Luke 20:16). As a result, they would get exactly the same punishment they had called for: total destruction (Matt 21:41), a complete undoing of everything they stood for. Forty years later, in AD 70, the Romans destroyed Israel. Ever since then, there has been no temple or genealogical records. That means no sacrifices or

#### THINK ABOUT IT

Jesus' story took an unusual turn.



#### THINK ABOUT IT

Jesus began with a simple, familiar story.

#### THINK ABOUT IT

The religious leaders knew Jesus was condemning their actions, but they refused to repent, hardening their hearts in defiance.



# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus teaches the parable of landowner • Mark 12:1–12



priesthood. Their system is gone. Now God's kingdom is entrusted not to Israel or its leaders, but to a new nation with faithful leaders (Matt 21:41; Mark 12:9), to the church and its apostles (1 Pet 2:9; Eph 2:20). Israel's enjoyment of the kingdom would have to wait (Luke 21:24), and those who rejected Jesus when He came would never enjoy it.

## Jesus used a prophecy to prove the parable (12:10–12)

When the leaders reacted against the parable, Jesus rebuked them again: "Have you not read this Scripture?" (Mark 12:10). How could they not know this? As the leaders of Israel, knowing and teaching Scripture was their job! Jesus quoted from the same psalm the people used to praise Him when He entered Jerusalem two days before (cf. Ps 118:26; Mark 11:9; Ps 118:22). He was affirming that He really was the Messiah. He was also giving another word picture, a rejected stone that in the end became the **cornerstone**. This most likely refers to the corner foundation stone, the stone that bears the weight of the building and is the standard for making the rest of the building level and straight. While Jesus would be rejected and killed, He would rise from the dead and become the foundation and focus of God's kingdom.

The cornerstone is both a blessing and a curse. It is a blessing because it allows the rest of the building to be built. The church is built upon Jesus (Eph 2:20), and whoever trusts in Jesus has a firm foundation and will never be shaken (Isa 28:16). But a cornerstone is also a curse, because when people walk by a building without paying attention, it is the sharp corner that they are most likely to bump into (1 Pet 2:8). Also, a cornerstone must be very large and solid, without any cracks, so anything it falls on will be crushed and anything that falls on it will shatter (Luke 20:18). As the stone that crushes and causes stumbling, Jesus was both King (Dan 2:34, 44–45) and God (Isa 8:14–15). He was warning the religious leaders again: receive the blessing by building your

life upon Jesus, or suffer the curse by refusing to submit to His authority.

After reciting the prophecy of the cornerstone, Jesus kept quoting from Psalm 118 to show two things. First, Psalm 118:23 shows the Father's **providence**, His control and oversight in sending Jesus to be the cornerstone (Mark 12:11). Remember how the Pharisees demanded to know who gave Jesus authority (11:28)? Now Jesus has answered them twice. The parable showed that the Son came with the authority of God, the vineyard owner. And now the prophecy showed that the stone was the cornerstone based on the authority of the Lord.

Second, for Jesus to be rejected and yet become the focus of God's kingdom would be "marvelous in our eyes" (Ps 118:23b). Jesus' incredible teaching and miracles regularly caused people to be amazed (Mark 1:27; 2:12; 15:5). But more than that, His victory despite rejection would be stunning. Only a handful of people had ever come back to life, and all of these were raised by a prophet or by Jesus. But Jesus took back His own life by His own divine power (John 10:18). His victory over death is the most powerful miracle ever, the most stunning example of God's supernatural power. Ever since then, anyone who rejects Jesus must deny His resurrection, and anyone who accepts Jesus must believe that Jesus rose again and lives forever as King over all (1 Cor 15:3–4, 17).

You have a choice. You can submit to His authority, give Him the fruit of obedience that He deserves, build your life upon Him as your sure foundation, and marvel at Him as your greatest glory and treasure. If you do, you will have life in His life and enter the kingdom of God. Or, like the religious leaders (Mark 12:12), you can live by your own authority and refuse to honor Him as your King. If you do, you will be destroyed.

### THINK ABOUT IT

Jesus is the cornerstone (Acts 4:10–12).



# Lesson Outline

*People who reject Jesus' authority will be destroyed.*



## AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

Let Jesus be your boss because . . .

1. Jesus is the Son of God who owns the vineyard (12:1–7).
2. God destroys everyone who rejects Jesus (12:8–9, 12).
3. Jesus is the cornerstone (12:10).
4. God makes sure Jesus wins (12:11).



## AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Jesus used a parable to condemn the religious leaders (12:1–9).
  - God created Israel and expected the fruit of righteousness (12:1).
  - Israel's leaders beat and killed God's prophets (12:2–5).
  - Israel's leaders would kill God's Son (12:6–8).
  - God would destroy Israel's leaders and entrust the kingdom to the church (12:9).
2. Jesus used a prophecy to prove the parable (12:10–12).
  - Jesus is the cornerstone—a blessing and a curse (12:10).
  - The Father sent Jesus and was in control (12:11).
  - The religious leaders planned to kill Jesus (12:12).





## Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



### Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. What did the man make?**  
A vineyard, with a wall, a winepress, and a watch tower.
- 2. What did the tenants (farmers who rent the land) do to the man's slaves?**  
They beat and killed the slaves instead of paying the rent.
- 3. What did they do to the man's son?**  
They killed him and threw him out of the vineyard.
- 4. What kind of stone is Jesus like?**  
A cornerstone—the foundation, the corner that guides the rest of the walls.



### Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. What did the vineyard represent?**  
Israel (more specifically, the kingdom which God entrusted to Israel).
- 2. Who did the different people represent?**  
The owner is God, the tenants are Israel's leaders, the slaves are the prophets, and the son is Jesus.
- 3. What did God expect from Israel?**  
God owned and cared for Israel, so Israel should have lived for Him (produced the fruit of righteousness).
- 4. Why should the tenants have respected the son?**  
The son of the owner is the heir. He is in charge of the vineyard.
- 5. What would God do to the leaders when they killed Jesus?**  
He would use Rome to destroy them—and their whole religious system, including temple, sacrifices, and priesthood.
- 6. After the parable, how did Jesus prove He is the Messiah?**  
Jesus quoted from the same psalm (Ps 118) the people used to praise Him when He entered Jerusalem two days before.
- 7. How was Jesus like the stone rejected by the builders?**  
Jesus would be rejected and killed, but He would rise from the dead and become the foundation and focus of God's kingdom.
- 8. How is the cornerstone both a blessing and a curse?**  
It is a blessing because it allows the rest of the building to be built. It is a curse because people stumble over it. A cornerstone is also very large and solid, so anything it falls on will be crushed and anything that falls on it will shatter.

# Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

## WHAT IS A CORNERSTONE?

The cornerstone is the most important stone in the building—it holds the whole building together. Build walls out of blocks to show the importance of the cornerstone. If you take out that one block, the whole structure falls.

## DO NOT JUDGE A TREAT BY ITS WRAPPER

Bring a number of different containers to class, each with a treat in it. Have some containers which look like they contain something very special and others which appear very undesirable. Put the best treats inside the ugliest containers. Select a few children to come and choose a treat for themselves and then reveal that the best treats were actually inside the worst looking containers. The people in Jesus' day were just like us. They rejected the best blessing that God had for them simply because it did not look like they expected. Does anybody know what that blessing was? Listen and we will find out in today's lesson.



ILLUSTRATE

## VINE WALL DÉCOR

Create the scene where this parable may have taken place. Use butcher paper and markers to create large stone walls. Allow the children to decorate this mural with paper leaves, grape vines, and grapes. Create a tower and a winepress out of cardboard where children can stomp "grapes." Finally, allow the children to taste some grapes or grape juice.

## STORY TIME

Tell the parable and at the end ask the children the same question Jesus asked: "What will the owner do?" See how they answer, then go on to explain what it means. Note: Depending on the age of your children, it might help to teach the principle of the parable before the parable. This may help younger children connect the parable with the truth that Jesus was teaching.



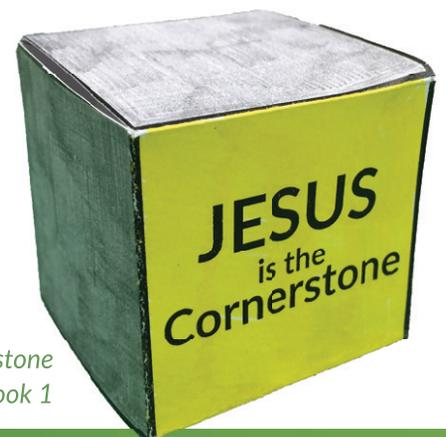
APPLY

## JESUS IS THE CORNERSTONE

*See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1.*

**Materials:** Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, glue stick, scissors.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color every side of the cube, and use a different color for the side "Jesus is the Cornerstone". The cut it and glue it.



*Jesus Is the Cornerstone*  
*See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*

# TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus teaches the parable of landowner • Mark 12:1–12



AGES 6–8 



INTRODUCE

## WARNING—DANGER

Show the class pictures of a number of different warning signs: beware of dog, yield, beware of falling rocks, high waves, sharks, electric shock, wet floors, keep out/no trespassing, etc. Talk about the purpose of warning signs and the consequence of ignoring them. In today's lesson, we're going to see two ways Jesus warned the religious leaders about the danger of rejecting His authority. Do you think they listened to Jesus' warning? We will find out in today's lesson.

## THE STONE THE BUILDERS REJECTED

Using blocks or small boxes, build a tall structure. Count out enough blocks so that there are as many blocks as there are children, with one block extra. Tell the children that each child can only pick out one block before the building begins. After the children finish picking their blocks, point to the one rejected block and write "Cornerstone" on the side. Begin building with that block. Have the children bring their blocks to you one by one and build around the cornerstone block. Demonstrate how if you take out the cornerstone the whole structure falls. In today's lesson, we're going to learn how the stone the builders rejected—Jesus—became the cornerstone.



ILLUSTRATE

## CORNERSTONES

Bring in some pictures of buildings with easily identifiable cornerstones. Point out that some cornerstones are painted a different color or constructed out of a different material to make them easy to identify. Some even contain words or the date of the building's construction. Does your church building have a visible cornerstone? If so, take the class out to examine it.

## JENGA

During a game of Jenga, players take turns removing one wooden block at a time from a tower made of 54 blocks. After each block is removed, it is carefully placed on top of the tower. The goal is to continue to remove blocks and stack them on top without the tower falling over. With a tower of Jenga blocks in front of you, ask the children which blocks would be the easiest to remove without tipping over the tower. What about the one on the bottom in the corner, the cornerstone? That would be the worst block to remove first, for all the other blocks rest on it. It is the cornerstone, the most important piece.



APPLY

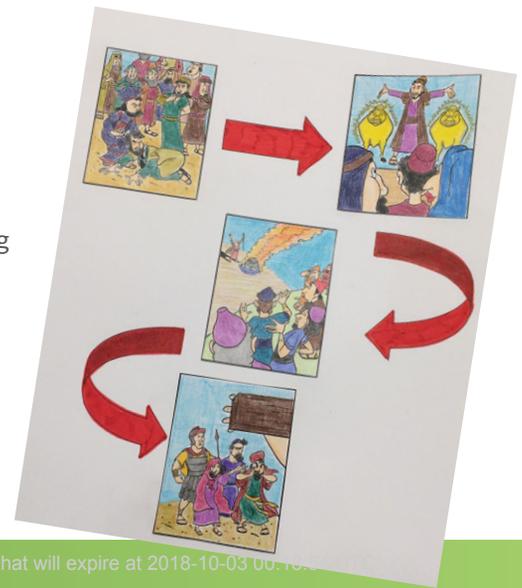
## ISRAEL REJECTS GOD

See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1.

**Materials:** Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, glue stick, scissors.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color every image with crayons, and cut it. Glue every image in the right order on the page "Israel Rejects God."

*Israel Rejects God*  
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

### THE PROPHETS OF GOD

In the parable of the landowner, the servants who are killed represent the prophets God sent to Israel. Prepare the children to hear the lesson by reminding them of the prophets God sent to Israel. Use previous lessons and pictures to review the ministry of Moses and Elijah. Review how Moses and Elijah called the people of Israel to obedience and repentance but how the people of Israel typically rejected God's prophets. End by talking about John the Baptist, the prophet the children will most likely recall.

### IMPORTANCE OF CORNERSTONE

Stack Styrofoam cups into a shape of a pyramid. Tell one child at a time to try to pull one of the corner cups out from the structure without knocking over the pyramid. After great difficulty and after many times restacking the cups, it should be apparent that the game is impossible. Use this opportunity to talk about the importance of a cornerstone within a building. All the walls lean upon or rest against a cornerstone. If this cornerstone is removed, the building collapses. In today's lesson, Jesus is spoken of as being the cornerstone.



ILLUSTRATE

### CRUSHED OR CRACKED

A cornerstone is large and solid. Anything it falls on will be crushed and anything that falls on it will shatter (Luke 20:18). Demonstrate this to the children with two bricks, some hard candy, and a five-gallon bucket. Demonstrate what happens to the hard candy when it falls on the brick. Now show the children what happens when the brick falls on the hard candy (do this inside the bucket). This saying reveals that both hostility and indifference are wrong responses to Christ. They are both worthy of judgment.

### PASSED OVER

Share the story of someone who was passed over for a position because they were thought to be too slow, too young, too short, etc. However, over time this person was able to rise to the highest level in their field, proving all the critics wrong. Connect this story to today's lesson: Jesus, the One rejected by the religious leaders (the so-called experts), became the cornerstone (the centerpiece of God's kingdom).



APPLY

### THE RIGHT RESPONSE

Both David and the Pharisees were drawn in by a parable that ended up exposing their own sin (2 Sam 12:1–12). But while the Pharisees still refused to repent (Mark 12:12), centuries earlier David had humbled himself before God, confessing his sin (2 Sam 12:13). David has left us a pattern to follow. David confessed that he had sinned “against the LORD,” and God graciously forgave him. May we, like David, humble ourselves before God and cry out to Him for forgiveness. He graciously hears and forgiveness all those confess their sin (1 John 1:7).



## LESSON 20

*Jesus teaches the parable of the talents*

MATTHEW 25:14-30



**Jesus rewards only faithful servants.**



*“Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master” (Matt 25:21).*

## Supporting Truths

1. Jesus is our master.
2. Jesus wants us to be faithful while we wait for Him to return.
3. Jesus rewards the faithful and punishes the faithless.
4. The faithful love God and the faithless hate Him.
5. God gives responsibility according to what He knows each one can handle.

## Objectives

1. Retell the parable of the talents.
2. Define faithfulness.
3. Contrast the rewards and punishments.
4. Contrast the attitudes of the faithful and the faithless.
5. Explain why the slaves received different amounts of money.

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus teaches the parable of the talents • Matthew 25:14-30



## Lesson Summary

Since the kingdom was not going to come right away, Jesus told a parable to teach His disciples how to live while they waited for Him to return. A master went on a long journey, and while he was gone he entrusted great wealth to three slaves. Two slaves worked hard and used their money to earn more money for their master, but the third slave buried his money. When the master returned, he rewarded the faithful slaves but punished the unfaithful slave.

## Spotlight on the Gospel

Jesus has been gone a long time, but while He is away, He has given believers rich gifts and opportunities to serve Him. True believers rejoice to work hard for Him because they love Him. Even though their results will vary, everyone who is faithful will enter the kingdom, where they will rejoice in Christ's presence and reign as His servants forever. But anyone who does not work faithfully will not enter, since their laziness proves that they never really loved Jesus.

LAST WEEK



Jesus teaches the parable  
of landowner  
*Mark 12:1-12*

THIS WEEK



Jesus teaches the  
parable of the talents  
*Matthew 25:14-30*

NEXT WEEK



Jesus prepares for His  
death  
*Matthew 26:1-56*

THE PASSION WEEK OF JESUS

# Lesson Commentary

## *Jesus rewards only faithful servants.*

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, His disciples believed the kingdom was near. But, as Jesus explained, the kingdom would be delayed (Matt 23:39). The disciples began asking Jesus what the signs of His coming would be (24:3). After describing several signs (24:4–35), Jesus then gave them instructions on how to live while He was gone. In order to be ready for His return (24:44; 25:13), they needed to be faithful (24:45). He had already explained that being faithful means waiting expectantly (25:1–13). Now, He explains that faithfulness also means working diligently until He returns.

### The master entrusted his money to his slaves (25:14–18)

To teach them to faithfully work while He was away, Jesus told a parable. A *parable* is a simple word picture that illustrates a profound spiritual truth. This parable illustrates a truth about the *kingdom of heaven* (25:1, 14). It is about how to live while waiting for Jesus' personal and glorious reign on earth when He returns (24:30; 25:1).

The master in this story trusted three slaves with a total of eight talents of silver. This was an enormous amount of money. It would take an unskilled laborer four lifetimes to earn that much money! Yet in those days, it was normal for wealthy owners to trust their slaves with important jobs. Even though slaves were the property of their owners, certain slaves were well-educated and highly-skilled, and they could act with the master's authority. Like the master in this story, Jesus was about to go away for a long time (24:14, 19), and during that time He would entrust His work on earth to believers. He would give them rich resources—abilities, gifts, and opportunities—which they were to use as His *slaves*, as people who belong to their Master, live for their Master, and exist to serve their Master (2 Cor 5:14–15).

Also, like the master, Jesus distributes His gifts unequally (Matt 25:15). Not only does every person differ in natural abilities and opportunities in life,

but God also gives spiritual gifts in proportion to the faith He assigns to each person (Rom 12:3). This may seem unfair, but only if we are thinking selfishly. It is actually a great blessing, for it shows that God knows us and does not burden us with more responsibility than we can handle.

As soon as the master left, the first two slaves immediately began investing and trading for their master's benefit. This illustrates God's purpose for all humanity. God created mankind to work (Gen 2:15), to cultivate and use creation's resources for His glory (1:26–29). Sin has not undone this purpose (Ps 8:6–8), and in heaven all believers will forever work perfectly for their Master (Rev 22:3). Do not sit around waiting, but instead work very hard until He comes (2 Thess 3:10–12).

#### THINK ABOUT IT

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men (Col 3:23).



The third slave did not work. He buried his one talent (Matt 25:18), which at that time was the best way to keep money safe. Motivated by fear, he would not take risks for the sake of his master. He is like so-called Christians who only care about *sins of commission*: they want to avoid doing bad things. But in the process, they commit terrible *sins of omission*: they are not doing good things. They do not realize that one who fails to do good is just as wicked as one who commits obvious sins (25:41–46; Jas 4:17).

### The master rewarded faithful slaves (25:19–23)

Although gone for a long time, the master did return. Believers often wonder, "How long, O LORD?" (Ps 13:1). And unbelievers often mock, saying that Christ will not return because the world seems to go on forever without change (2 Pet 3:4). Yet Christ will return. Even if you die before then, you can have hope, because one day you will enter His kingdom (1 Thess 4:13–18).

The first two slaves did not give up. Even though one earned more money than the other, both were equally praised because they were equally *faithful*,

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON



Jesus teaches the parable of the talents • Matthew 25:14–30



## THINK ABOUT IT

Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up (Gal 6:9).

have accomplished for God, but about whether we are devoted to God and have faithfully used what He has given us for Him. He loves this, because He loves to see His faithfulness reflected in His slaves (Deut 7:9).

The master gave two rewards. First, He gave greater authority, resources, and responsibility in working for God (Matt 25:21a, 23a). What? How is more work a reward? This work is what humans were made for. While on earth, faithful believers receive more and more ability and opportunity to serve God (2 Tim 2:20–21). And in heaven, all believers will reign as servants of God forever (2:12).



## THINK ABOUT IT

Christians do not “retire” from serving God.

His slaves being faithful. But how is His joy a reward for them? Because His joy is their joy. Nothing makes a real Christian happier than to see Jesus happy, because he loves nothing more than his Master. This is why they obey Him, because they enjoy giving pleasure to their Master (John 15:11). They also love nothing more than to be with their Master (Ps 16:11; 27:4; Phil 1:23). Jesus gives the best gift ever: He welcomes the faithful into His joyful presence (John 14:3; 17:24).

## The master punished the unfaithful slave (25:24–30)

The third slave was not faithful (Matt 25:24–27). He neither loved nor served his master. He was **wicked**,

trustworthy, dependable, reliable, and loyal (Matt 25:20–23). God judges not by outcome but by character, not by results but by faithfulness. It is not about how much we

bad, evil, and morally worthless, because he had no real love for his master. Instead of delighting in the master’s joy like the first two slaves, he thought his master was an unjust and difficult man, someone impossible to please. As a result, the slave was also **slothful** and lazy. By not even investing the money, the slave proved he simply did not want to benefit his master. He saw no personal benefit in it for himself, so he did not work.

Many professing Christians are no different. They do not really know God, so God’s commands feel like harsh burdens. As a result, they live their lives in fear.

They read their Bibles, go to church, and give tithes as if they were paying off their debt to God. They might think they are good Christians, but they are wicked, for they do these things only to protect themselves. Their whole life is really only about loving themselves, not about loving God. When serving God means denying themselves, they give up and are lazy. They need to stop living as cowards, fearing for their own lives (Matt 16:24–25), and instead live boldly out of an overwhelming love for God (Deut 6:5).

Such professing Christians are not Christians at all, for there is no middle ground between faithful and faithless. The wicked slave did not just get a smaller reward. Instead, he received exactly the opposite. Instead of greater authority and service, he lost even the opportunity he had (Matt 25:28–29). Instead of joy in the master’s presence, he wept outside the master’s presence (25:30). This is just, for he never wanted the reward anyway. He did not like to serve the master, and he did not enjoy the master’s presence. Professing believers are like that slave. They chase after the pleasures of this world or self-righteously seek some new spiritual experience because they have no joy in the real reward—serving God and enjoying His presence. As a result, they will suffer away from God forever (25:46).

## THINK ABOUT IT

Laziness is a serious sin and a sign of hatred for God (Prov 21:25–26).



# Lesson Outline

*Jesus rewards only faithful servants.*



## AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

Work faithfully because . . .

1. Jesus is the Master (25:14a).
2. Jesus gives gifts to use for Him (25:14b–18).
3. Jesus is coming back (25:19).
4. Jesus rewards faithful servants (25:20–23).
5. Jesus punishes unfaithful servants (25:24–30)



## AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. The master entrusted his money to his slaves (25:14–18).
  - The master was going on a long journey (25:14).
  - The master gave each slave a different amount (25:15).
  - Two slaves used the money to earn more money (25:16–17).
  - One slave buried the money (25:18).
2. The master rewarded faithful slaves (25:19–23).
  - The master returned (25:19).
  - The master rewarded unequal results equally (25:20–23).
  - The master rewarded with greater responsibility (25:21a, 23a).
  - The master rewarded by sharing his joy (25:21b, 23b).
3. The master punished the unfaithful slave (25:24–30).
  - The slave did not honor or serve his master (25:24–25).
  - The master exposed the slave's wickedness (25:26–27).
  - The master gave the slave's talent to a faithful slave (25:28–29).
  - The master threw the slave into outer darkness (25:30).





## Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



### Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. How much money did the master give to each slave?**  
Five talents, two talents, and one talent.
- 2. What did the slaves with five talents and two talents do?**  
The first earned five more, the second earned two more.
- 3. What did the third slave do with his one talent?**  
He buried it.
- 4. What did the master do to the third slave?**  
He took away his talent and punished him.



### Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. What is this parable about?**  
It is about how to live while waiting for the kingdom of heaven.
- 2. Why did the master give the slaves different amounts?**  
He knew what each slave was able to take care of.
- 3. What was wrong with just burying the money?**  
God expects us to serve Him with the time, abilities, and opportunities He has given us.
- 4. Why did the first two slaves get the same reward, even though they earned different amounts of money?**  
They were both faithful. God judges us by our faithfulness, not by results.
- 5. What were the two rewards?**  
(1) Greater authority to serve. (2) Sharing in the master's joy.
- 6. How are these rewards**  
(1) Humans were made to work for God, so that is what brings the most joy. (2) True believers love God most, so they are most happy when they see His happiness.
- 7. Why was the third slave wicked?**  
Instead of loving his master, he was afraid of him. He dishonored his master by thinking that he was unjust and cruel.
- 8. Why was the third slave lazy?**  
He did not work for his master.

# Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

### FAITHFUL WHILE THEY WAIT

Give the children instructions and materials they need for a project. Tell them you have had a tough week and are going to curl up and take a nap in the corner of the class. But while you're resting, they should complete their project. Let them decide how they will use these few minutes while you snore in the corner. When you "wake up" from your nap, find out how many children were faithful to work while you were asleep. In today's lesson, we will meet three servants who were given a job to do while their master was away. Let's find out if they were faithful.

### WELL DONE FAITHFUL SERVANT

Give each child a coloring sheet. Give some children five crayons, some two, and some one. Instruct them to be faithful with what they have each been given. After the children have finished, take a look at all the coloring pictures. Give a small prize to the children that were faithful in using the crayons they were given. Explain that God is a judge who judges if we were faithful to serve Him with the time and ability He has given to us.



ILLUSTRATE

### ONLY PRETENDING

Ask the children what it means to pretend. Have the children pretend to be different animals: cat, dog, lion, eagle, etc. Point out children that are excellent pretenders. After the activity, explain that the third servant lost his talent and was punished because he was only pretending to be a Christian. He neither loved nor served his master. Jesus teaches the parable to show that real Christians are those who faithfully love and serve Him. Pretenders only love and serve themselves.

### TALENT TO BUILD

The parable of the talents can be graphically illustrated using blocks. As you teach the lesson, you can liken the first servant to a man who was given some blocks to build a tower. He used all his blocks and built a tall tower. The same can be demonstrated for the second servant. The last servant can be likened to a man who was too scared that the blocks would fall over and that he would get into big trouble, so he did not try building anything.



APPLY

### BAG OF TALENTS

See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*.

**Materials:** Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, glue stick, scissors.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color every image and cut them. Glue the two sides of the bag together gluing only on the sides, being sure that you leave space for the coins to get inside the bag.

*Bag of Talents*  
See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*



# TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus teaches the parable of the talents • Matthew 25:14–30



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

## FAITHFULNESS

A young boy was given a dollar by his parents to give as an offering during Sunday school. But when the offering basket came by, he hesitated. Could he not just keep the money? His parents would never know, and the church would not miss such a small amount. But then again, the reason his parents had given him this money was so that he could give it as an offering. Ask the children what the young boy should do. If he kept the money, how would that demonstrate unfaithfulness? In today's lesson, we're going to meet three servants. Two of them were faithful, one was not.

## YOUR BEST WITH WHAT YOU HAVE

Tell the children to build the tallest tower they can with the materials you give them. Split the class into groups and pass out building materials: regular sized marshmallows, mini marshmallows, pretzel rods, and pretzel sticks. However, give each group differing amounts of materials. After the towers are built, award each group according to how well they used the materials you gave them, not how the height of their tower compares to others.



ILLUSTRATE

## WHAT IS A TALENT?

In this parable, a talent refers to a specific amount of money (Matt 25:18). Bring in a five-dollar bill and three one-dollar bills to show to the children. Call three children up front to represent the three servants. Give the first servant five dollars, the second two dollars, and the third one dollar. Have the children show what each servant did with their money.

## IDEA MAN

Before the lesson, give the children small sheets of paper to write down different ways they can serve God. Have the children put these slips of paper in a box. During the lesson, bring out the box and read some of the entries. Discuss with the children how they can serve God by faithfully using the time, opportunities, and abilities He has given them.



APPLY

## I CAN SERVE GOD WITH ALL I HAVE

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

**Materials:** Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, yarn.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color every image and cut them. Make a hole on every image and pass the yarn in every hole so to make a necklace.

*I Can Serve God with all I Have*  
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

### INTRODUCTION

Parents have a great responsibility. God has given them the task of protecting, teaching, and caring for their children. By law if a parent is not faithful with this responsibility, their children can be taken away. This is similar to the responsibility we have in responding to Jesus Christ. Just as our parents care for us because they love us, those who truly love God will faithfully serve Him with the blessings He has given them. Let's find out what happens to those who are faithful and unfaithful with these blessings.

### DOING THE BEST HE CAN

There were two brothers on a baseball team. The older was lightning quick, and the younger terribly slow. After hitting a ground-er to the shortstop, the younger brother slowly stumbled his way to first base; he was out by a mile. His teammates were upset. "Why can you not be more like your brother?" they complained. However, his teammates didn't know that he was suffering from a progressive disease that greatly affected his balance and coordination—he was doing the best he could. That is exactly what God asks of those who serve Him: that they serve Him the best they can with the resources He gives them.



ILLUSTRATE

### A TALENT OF SILVER

In those days, a talent of silver (somewhere between 75 and 130 pounds) was worth about 6,000 denarii, or as much as an unskilled worker could earn in 6,000 days (20 years working six days a week). Multiply your local minimum wage by hours in a typical work day, and then multiply it by 6,000. For example, at \$10 per hour and 8 hours per day, a talent of silver would be worth \$480,000.

### A SPECIAL BOND

Have you ever noticed how little children who love their parents will do almost anything to please them? They love to see their parents happy, and they are the happiest when their parents are happy. They do not want to disappoint their parents, and are greatly saddened when they do. They love being in their parent's presence (hanging on a leg or limb), and would be absolutely crushed if their parents told them they didn't want to be around them. This is how two of the servants in today's lesson feel about their master. However, a third does not. Let's find out what happens to these three.



APPLY

### SAYING AND SHOWING

#### THANKS

Ask the children to name some things they are very thankful for. Explain that it is good to be thankful for what God provides, but God not only wants us to say thanks, but to show that we are thankful. We show that we are thankful by using what God has given us in the way He intends. Ask the children to think about how they should "use" those things they have already mentioned.



## LESSON 21

*Jesus prepares for His death*

MATTHEW 26:1-56



**Jesus died according to His own plan.**



*“And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins’”  
(Matt 26:27–28).*

## Supporting Truths

1. Jesus chose to die.
2. Jesus was in control of His death.
3. Jesus is worth worshiping.
4. Jesus died on Passover.
5. Jesus faced death through prayer.

## Objectives

1. List two reasons Jesus chose to die.
2. List several aspects of His death that Jesus was in control of.
3. Contrast the attitudes of Mary and Judas toward Jesus.
4. Explain how Jesus provides a greater deliverance.
5. Contrast how Jesus and the disciples prepared for temptation.

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

*Jesus prepares for His death • Matthew 26:1-56*



## Lesson Summary

The religious leaders plotted how to kill Jesus, but Jesus was a step ahead. He predicted His death would come in two days, and He accepted Mary's perfume as an anointing for burial. During the Passover meal, Jesus explained that His body would be beaten and His blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins. He knew He would be deserted, arrested, and killed, and He had the power to prevent it. Instead, He prayed and voluntarily chose to submit to God's will.

## Spotlight on the Gospel

Because Jesus willingly gave up His life, He is able to offer forgiveness of sins. While the blood of the original Passover lambs saved the lives of the firstborn Israelites, Jesus' blood gives eternal life to everyone who believes. Eternal life is only for those who worship Jesus as their great love. They are not perfect, but through failure they realize their weakness. They stop depending on themselves and instead cling to Christ alone.

LAST WEEK



**Jesus teaches the parable  
of the talents**

*Matthew 25:14-30*

THIS WEEK



**Jesus prepares for His  
death**

*Matthew 26:1-56*

NEXT WEEK



**The trial and denial of  
Jesus**

*Mark 14:53-15:15*

THE PASSION WEEK OF JESUS

# Lesson Commentary

## *Jesus died according to His own plan.*

Jesus announced His death several times (Matt 16:21; 17:9; 20:18), and He had just finished teaching His disciples how to live while He was away (Matt 24–25). Jesus was not surprised by His death. He was not a helpless teacher trapped by powerful enemies. He was in control, sovereignly planning and determining the time of His own death.

### Jesus controlled the preparation for His death (26:1-25)

Jesus planned to be crucified on *Passover* (26:1–2), a celebration of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. Passover was especially a reminder of how God spared the firstborn in every house marked with the blood of an unblemished lamb (Exod 12:3–6, 22–23). So Jesus would be the perfect Passover Lamb (John 1:29; 1 Cor 5:7), dying to deliver people from sin and death. But how could this happen exactly on Passover? Jesus' enemies tried to kill Him in Bethlehem as an infant (2:13), in Nazareth at the beginning of His ministry (Luke 4:16–30), and in Jerusalem after He healed on the Sabbath (John 5:18; 7:44–46). The one day they did not want to kill Him was Passover (Matt 26:5)! Yet they never had any power over Jesus' life. Instead, Jesus gave His life at the right time by His own authority (John 10:18).

Four days earlier (12:1), Jesus had confirmed He would die soon. He was enjoying the Sabbath in Bethany, just over the ridge from Jerusalem, when Lazarus' sister Mary anointed His head and feet (Matt 26:6–7; John 12:3). Her *alabaster* vial was carved out of white marble from Egypt. Inside was pure *nard*, a valuable perfume from the roots of a flower found in the mountains of India and China. It was worth almost a year's wages (John 12:5)! How could Jesus allow this when He had just emphasized caring for the poor (Matt 25:35–40; 26:8–9)? Yet what the disciples called a waste Jesus called beautiful (26:10), for Mary was preparing for the most important event in all of history, Jesus' voluntary death on behalf of sinners (26:12–13).

Mary loved Jesus more than her most precious possession, but Judas sold Jesus for a third of that (26:14–16). Maybe Judas was eager to follow Jesus at first, but now it's clear he never really loved Jesus. He was only following Jesus for his own earthly benefit. It is no surprise he began stealing from the group's moneybag (John 12:6). In the end, 30 shekels of silver was worth more to him than the Lord (Matt 26:15–16). This was the price of a slave in the Old Testament (Exod 21:32; Zech 11:12), worth 120 denarii, about 4 month's wages. This is terrible treachery, yet how often do we act unfaithfully to get even less?

Yet Jesus, not Judas, was in control. Jesus kept the place of the Passover meal secret so that Judas would not betray Him before He could explain the meaning of His death (Matt 26:17–18; Luke 22:8). Then at the right time, Jesus prompted Judas to act quickly and betray Him that very night (Matt 26:20–25; John 13:27). But how could Jesus eat the Passover meal and still die on Passover? It seems the Pharisees and Galileans celebrated Passover one day earlier than the Sadducees and Judeans. This allowed Jesus, a Galilean, to show the meaning of the Passover meal on Thursday evening, while still dying at the time the Sadducees' lambs were being sacrificed on Friday afternoon. It was all under Jesus' control.

### Jesus controlled the significance of His death (26:26–35)

Jesus even changed the meaning of the Passover meal. The unleavened bread used to symbolize Israel quickly leaving idolatrous Egypt, but now it symbolizes Christ's own body (Matt 26:26). The wine used to celebrate the covenant God made with Israel at Sinai (Exod 24:8), but now it celebrates the new covenant sealed by the blood of Jesus (Matt 26:28). Despite these startling changes, the Messiah's battered body and poured-out blood had been predicted long ago (Isa 53:5–7; Ps 22:14–16). As had the new covenant

**THINK ABOUT IT**  
True worship flows out of a deep love for Jesus.



**THINK ABOUT IT**  
Those motivated by greed will not enter Christ's kingdom (Eph 5:5).



# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus prepares for His death • Matthew 26:1–56



## THINK ABOUT IT

The Lord's Supper celebrates a new exodus: freedom from sin.

Even the disciples deserting Jesus was according to plan, prophesied long ago (26:31; Zech 13:7). Jesus was not surprised. As the good shepherd, He offered hope to His confused sheep (Matt 26:32). Unfortunately, the disciples were blinded by *pride*. Peter shows that pride is thinking we know better even than Jesus, thinking we are better than others, and being self-confident. He thought he loved Jesus more than he really did. As long as Peter relied on his own strength, he would be doomed to failure (1 Cor 10:12). So before the disciples could be the church's first leaders, they needed to realize their human weakness. As a result, Jesus would let them be



## THINK ABOUT IT

Realize how weak you really are and depend entirely on God (Jude 21, 24).

which brings forgiveness of sins for many people (Isa 53:11–12; Jer 31:31–34; Matt 1:21). Jesus was doing everything according to plan.

broken and weak, so that the power of Christ could live in them (Matt 26:34; 2 Cor 1:9; 12:9–10). So even in being deserted, Jesus was in control, proving that He is the good Shepherd.

## Jesus controlled His flesh in His death (26:36–56)

Even though Jesus' death was God's plan and His own choice, it was still a terrible struggle. As a human, Jesus was weighed down by the physical suffering and death He was facing (Matt 26:37). In addition, He knew He was going to drink "the cup," which meant that He would bear God's awful wrath (26:39; Isa 51:17). He knew He would become sin and be treated like a sinner (2 Cor 5:21), even though He was sinless and hated sin (1 Pet 2:22; Ps 119:104). He was facing His biggest test: controlling His own human nature.

Unlike His disciples, Jesus knew the weakness of human nature. The disciples show that self-confidence leads to

distraction, distraction to temptation, temptation to sin, and sin to disaster (Matt 26:40–41, 51). Unlike them, Jesus humbly depended on the Father in prayer. First, He spent time alone in prayer before temptation came. Second, He spoke plainly to God about His suffering and need (26:39; Phil 4:6; 1 Pet 5:7). Third, He cared more about God's will than about His own desires (Matt 26:42; 6:10). Fourth, He kept praying without giving up (26:44; Rom 12:12). God answers that kind of prayer. Because Jesus drew near to God, God drew near to Him (Jas 4:8).

God did not take the cross away, but He did give Jesus victory over temptation when Judas came to betray Him (Matt 26:47). Jesus had a good excuse to resist, since His arrest was completely wrong. Judas was a traitor, but on top of that, he was offensive. He kissed Jesus, even though it was not proper for a student to kiss his teacher without the teacher doing so first. He also called Jesus "Rabbi," or teacher, a term that only Jesus' enemies use in the book of Matthew. Not only was Judas an insulting traitor, but the crowd was also wicked. They were unjust in treating Jesus like a criminal, and they were cowards, afraid to arrest Him openly (26:55). Judas and the mob deserved arrest, not Jesus.

If that's true, then why didn't Jesus fight back like Peter did? Peter attacked the high priest's slave, who would have been a very important person (26:51). This might seem brave, but Peter was still unprepared, impatient, and self-confident. His action was harmful and illegal (26:52). It was also silly, since Jesus could have commanded thousands of *angels*, *heaven's fiery warriors*, to fight for Him (26:53)—and just one angel was enough to wipe out a massive army (2 Kgs 19:35)! But most importantly, Peter's action was wrong, because it was going against God's will (Matt 26:54). In the end, Jesus submitted not to the power of His enemies, but to the will of God (26:56). Far from being a helpless victim, Jesus was in control. He was a willing sacrifice, dying to set us free.

# Lesson Outline

*Jesus died according to His own plan.*



## AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Jesus chose to die at the right time (26:1-25).
2. Jesus chose to die to set sinners free (26:26–35).
3. Jesus chose to die to obey His Father (26:36–56).



## AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Jesus controlled the preparation for His death (26:1–25).
  - Jesus upset the leaders' plans (26:1–5).
  - Jesus affirmed Mary's offering (26:6–13).
  - Jesus used Judas' betrayal (26:14–25).
2. Jesus controlled the significance of His death (26:26–35).
  - Jesus is the Passover substitute (26:26–30).
  - Jesus is the great Shepherd (26:31–35).
3. Jesus controlled His flesh in His death (26:36–56).
  - Jesus submitted to the Father in prayer (26:36–46).
  - Jesus submitted to Scripture in His arrest (26:47–56).





## Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



### Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. What day did Jesus plan to die on?**  
Passover.
- 2. What is Passover?**  
It is a meal when Israelites killed a lamb to celebrate how God rescued them from Egypt.
- 3. What did Jesus say about the bread and the wine?**  
He said the bread was like His body and the wine was like His blood.
- 4. Why did Jesus choose to die?**  
To provide forgiveness of sins and to obey the Father.



### Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. Did the Pharisees want to kill Jesus during Passover?**  
No. They were afraid of the crowds.
- 2. What did Mary do for Jesus?**  
She anointed His head and washed His feet with very expensive perfume.
- 3. What did Jesus say about this?**  
He said it was the right thing to do, because it was anointing Him for burial.
- 4. How much did Judas agree to betray Jesus for?**  
For thirty pieces of silver, worth about 4 months' wages or a few thousand dollars.
- 5. How did Jesus control the time of His arrest?**  
First, He hid the place of the Passover meal. Then He prompted Judas to betray Him during the night by showing He knew about a traitor.
- 6. Why would the disciples desert Jesus?**  
It was prophesied that the Shepherd would be killed and His sheep scattered. Also, the disciples were too confident in themselves, so they did not prepare for temptation.
- 7. What did Jesus do right before being arrested?**  
He prayed and submitted to the Father's will.
- 8. Why did Jesus not resist arrest?**  
Even though He had the power to defeat His enemies, He chose to obey Scripture.

# Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

## WHAT IS PATIENCE?

How do the children feel the night before Christmas or their birthday? How about the night before something scary like going to the doctor to get a shot? Patience is waiting with a happy heart. In today's lesson, Jesus shows great patience. In just a few days, Jesus would die on the cross as a sacrifice for sin. Yet although He knew it would be a difficult event, Jesus waited patiently and obeyed God's will for His life. Jesus displays this same patience towards sinners, allowing them time to repent (Rom 2:4).

## WHAT DO FRIENDS DO?

Ask the children what a friend is. Ask them what kinds of things they like to do with their friends. What does a good friend do? Does a good friend lie about his friends? Does a good friend get his friends in trouble? Ask them what kind of friend they want to be. In today's lesson, we are going to learn about one of Jesus' friends who acted like His enemy.



ILLUSTRATE

## THE PASSOVER MEAL

See the detailed description of a Passover meal in Year 2, Lesson 45. Use this to add vividness to your description for the children. You might even bring in certain elements as visual aids.

## TIME LINE

Today's lesson is all about timing. Create a time line of the events of today's lesson. As you teach through the lesson, place pictures of objects such as coins, bread and wine, praying hands, ears, lips, rooster, etc. along the time-line at key points in the lesson.



APPLY

## THE PERFUME OF WORSHIP

See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*.

**Materials:** Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, glue stick, scissors, yarn, tan construction paper.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color the images, glue the two sides of the bottle together. Glue the writing on the bottle. Cut a cork shaped-form from the construction paper. Glue the yarn in the back of the cork and then tie it to the neck of the bottle.



*The Perfume of Worship*  
See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*



AGES 9–11



### TRUE VALUE

Old computers are practically worthless, so people often just throw them away. That is just what James Howells did in England. The trash truck came, and the computer was gone. Later, he realized that a kind of electronic money (bitcoin) was stored on the computer. That digital money had become very valuable—there were 4 million dollars on the hard drive! He had just thrown away enough money to last him a lifetime because he misjudged the value of that computer. Have you correctly judged the value of Jesus?

### FAILURE TO PRAY IS PLANNING TO FAIL

Because the disciples failed to pray, they were weak and unable to resist sin's temptation (Matt 26:40–41, 51). By failing to pray, they failed to prepare for the spiritual battle raging all around them (Eph 6:18). There were like a football player running onto the field without a helmet (hold up helmet), or a soccer player rushing into the game with shin guards (hold up shin guards), or a marathon runner standing on the starting line barefoot (hold up shoes and socks). They were so unprepared. And we are too, when we fail to pray.



### DEVOTION

How do we show our devotion? Is it by breaking a bottle of perfume or cologne and pouring its contents on someone's head and feet? Show the children a bottle of perfume and cologne and pretend to do this. This is how Mary showed her devotion to Jesus, but how do we show ours? Talk about different ways we show devotion to Jesus: time in Bible and prayer, obedience to parents, sharing salvation with family and friends, etc.

### SELF-RESTRAINT

Jesus said He could call down 12 legions of angels. A full-strength Roman legion usually contained about 6,000 soldiers, so that makes 72,000 angels. And just one angel was able to kill 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night (2 Kgs 19:35)! Jesus could command these angels because as the Son of God, He was in charge of the armies of heaven. So why didn't He?



### THE PURPOSE OF PATIENCE

Jesus demonstrated incredible patience during His betrayal and arrest. He allowed Judas, a member of His inner circle, to betray Him to the religious leaders. He endured Judas's offensive kiss, the wicked crowds, and the hypocritical religious leaders. He could have easily resisted their arrest with his own army—72,000 fiery angels. But He did not. He allowed them to go through with their unjust arrest in order that Scripture might be fulfilled (Matt 26:54). He was obedient to His Father and patient with sinful men. This patience gave Judas, the crowds, and the religious leaders time to repent (Rom 2:4). And God has shown this same kindness to you. Have you responded to God's kindness and patience by repenting of your sin? If you have, do you live each day in light of the grace God has shown you through Jesus Christ?



## LESSON 22

### *The trial and denial of Jesus*

MARK 14:53-15:15



**Jesus was unjustly abandoned and condemned.**



***“And Pilate said to them, ‘Why, what evil has he done?’ But they shouted all the more, ‘Crucify him!’” (Mark 15:14).***

## Supporting Truths

1. Jesus did nothing wrong.
2. Jesus is Messiah and King.
3. Jesus is the Son of God and Son of Man.
4. Jesus was abandoned by everyone.
5. Jesus was counted guilty so that guilty people can be counted innocent.

## Objectives

1. Recite the key verse.
2. State the questions of Caiaphas and Pilate.
3. Explain that Jesus is the real judge.
4. Analyze the three responses to Jesus: the Jews', Peter's, and Pilate's.
5. Explain how the release of Barnabas is a picture of why Jesus chose to die.

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

The trial and denial of Jesus • Mark 14:53–15:15



## Lesson Summary

After Jesus was arrested, the Sanhedrin desperately tried to find an accusation against Jesus so they could put Him to death. They got what they wanted when Jesus Himself claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God, and the Son of Man. Not only was Jesus falsely condemned, but He was also betrayed by Peter, perhaps His closest earthly friend. Then, instead of protecting Jesus, Pilate flogged Him and condemned Him to be crucified.

## Spotlight on the Gospel

In the end, Jesus was completely alone and rejected. His enemies thought they had won. But in reality, Jesus had refused to defend Himself because He was choosing to die, the innocent in the place of the guilty. Because He obeyed to the point of death, He won the battle. As a result, those who truly love Jesus will be forgiven even though they still fail. But those who care more about their own lives than about Jesus will be judged.

LAST WEEK



Jesus prepares for His death

Matthew 26:1–56

THIS WEEK



The trial and denial of Jesus

Mark 14:53–15:15

NEXT WEEK



Jesus endures the cross

Mark 15:16–47

THE PASSION WEEK OF JESUS

# Lesson Commentary

## *Jesus was unjustly abandoned and condemned.*

Jesus' condemnation is an upside-down story. The One who will righteously judge all people is judged by unrighteous imposters. The One accused of blasphemy is blasphemed against. The One who speaks the truth does not defend Himself, while the one who defends himself lies to do it. The innocent is condemned to death, but the guilty is set free. How could such a backward story happen? Jesus knew that victory would come through what looked like defeat, so He was willing to be abandoned and condemned by everyone.

### The Jews judged the true Judge (14:53–65)

Jesus was taken to the house of Caiaphas, the high priest (Mark 14:53), where He was condemned by those He came to save. Just as Jesus had predicted, He was rejected by the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes (8:31). Although it was probably not even 3 AM yet, the *Sanhedrin* had already gathered (14:55). This council of 71 religious and civil leaders was like Israel's supreme court, yet they did not care about justice. Instead of starting with an accusation and investigating to see if it was true, they started with a death sentence and then tried to find a reason for it. Since only Rome could legally put a criminal to death, all they wanted to do was find charges that would make it seem right to hand Him over to the Romans.

To do this, they needed at least two witnesses to confirm the same accusation, and they did not care if they lied to do it (14:56; Deut 19:15–19). Eventually, two witnesses accused Jesus of speaking against the temple (14:57–58; Matt 26:60–61). This was a serious charge. To talk of the temple being destroyed was to declare judgment against all Israel. When the prophets Uriah and Jeremiah had prophesied the destruction of Solomon's temple, Uriah was executed, and Jeremiah almost was (Jer 26:7–24). Even worse, to rebuild the temple was to take charge in the place of Israel's current rulers. So even though the accusation was false

(Mark 13:2), and even though the witnesses did not agree in every detail (14:59), it was close enough for Jesus' enemies to use it against Him (15:29).

Since the evidence was not legally acceptable, Jesus had no need to defend Himself according to the law. But He also willingly chose not to, because He had chosen to go silently to slaughter (14:60–61a; Isa 53:7). Surprised, the high priest questioned His authority directly (14:61b). Was He the *Christ, Messiah*, the One anointed to save and to rule (Ps 2:2; Isa 61:1)? Was He the *Son of the Blessed One, the Davidic king who will judge and rule over all nations* (Ps 2:7–12)? This time Jesus was not silent. Since it was time for Him to die, for the first time in His life He clearly and publically said He was the Messiah (Mark 14:62). He said, "I am," echoing God's own name (Exod 3:14). He called Himself the *Son of Man* coming on clouds, the One with authority from God to judge and rule over all forever (Dan 7:13–14). As the one who would sit at God's right hand, Jesus would judge His judges (Ps 110).

**THINK ABOUT IT**  
Guilty judges  
condemned the  
righteous Judge.



The Jews' response is ironic. First, it is ironic that Caiaphas questioned Jesus' authority. Jesus rightly possessed all authority, but Caiaphas was high priest illegally, since he was not a descendent of Aaron (Exod 29:9; Num 16:40). Second, Caiaphas had said "Blessed One" instead of "God" to be extra careful not to blaspheme, and he tore his clothes as a sign of grief and horror at blasphemy (Mark 14:63–64). But Jesus did not blaspheme. He did not openly dishonor God, because He spoke the truth. It was the Sanhedrin who were blaspheming by dishonoring the Son of God right in front of them. Third, the temple police mockingly urged Jesus to prophesy (14:65). By mocking and spitting on Him, they were actually causing Jesus' prophecy to come true (10:34), and Isaiah's too (Isa 50:6).

### Peter denied his true Friend (14:66–72)

In the face of such insults, at least Peter stood by Jesus. Or did he? Despite his flaws, Peter loved Jesus intensely. Of all the disciples, he alone was there

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON



## The trial and denial of Jesus • Mark 14:53–15:15



### THINK ABOUT IT

Jesus was despised and rejected, just as Isaiah said He would be (Isa 53:3).

with Jesus (Mark 14:54). Yet even Peter abandoned Jesus (14:66–71). When Jesus was accused, He did not defend Himself. But when Peter was accused, he was only concerned with defending himself. When Jesus was questioned, Jesus spoke the truth. But when Peter was questioned, he kept lying. The third time, he used an oath, a promise, asking God to curse him if what he was saying was not true (14:71). Jesus was abandoned by even His closest friends.

Peter's failure warned and encouraged the Christians who first read Mark's gospel. Their loyalty to Jesus was being tested by persecution. Peter's failure warned them that if they were self-confident and prayerless like Peter was, they would fail (1 Cor 10:12). But Peter's restoration encouraged them that even in failure, there is hope through repentance. When Peter heard a rooster crow the second time, he burst into tears (Mark 14:29–31, 72). He realized he had failed the One he loved most (Luke 22:61–62). This is **godly sorrow**, for Peter was sad out of love for Jesus, not out of concern for himself. Jesus later restored Peter, and Peter wrote down two important lessons he had learned from his failure. First, be humble, because Satan easily devours



### THINK ABOUT IT

Because Jesus was faithful, unfaithful people can be forgiven.

proud people (1 Pet 5:5–8). Second, even in failure, have hope. Because Jesus did not fail, God is able to restore and strengthen you to the very end (5:10).

### Pilate handed over the true King (15:1–15)

After being taken to Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, Jesus still refused to defend Himself (Mark 15:1–5). He was accused of claiming to be the King of the Jews, which would make Him a rebel against Rome. This was partly true and partly false. As the Messiah, Jesus really was the King of the Jews, and He really would crush Israel's enemies and set Israel free. But it was also false,

because Jesus' kingdom would come down from heaven, not through an earthly revolution (John 18:36). So Jesus answered Pilate, "You have said so" (Mark 15:2). In other words, "Yes, I am King of the Jews, but I am not the sort of King you are thinking of."

As the Roman governor, Pilate's job was to uphold law and order in Judea, and that meant punishing the guilty and protecting the innocent. But he was more concerned about his own career. Recently, he had foolishly tried to put shields with Emperor Tiberius' image on them in his headquarters in Jerusalem. This violated the Jewish ban on images in Jerusalem, so the Jews sent messengers to appeal directly to Tiberius. Tiberius sided with the Jews, and Pilate only avoided Tiberius' wrath because he was friends with Sejanus, Tiberius' second-in-command. But recently Tiberius had executed Sejanus for treason. Pilate was now vulnerable and could not risk the Jews appealing to Caesar again.

Still, Pilate hated to give in to the chief priests. When he heard the crowd asking for him to keep his custom, he suggested releasing Jesus (15:6–9). His plan seemed logical: if the religious leaders were envious of Jesus (15:10), then Jesus must be popular with the rest of the people, so surely they would ask for His release.

But as usual, Pilate was wrong about the Jews. It seems the crowd had asked about Barabbas to begin with, since he was a popular freedom fighter (15:7–8). The chief priests turned this to their advantage (15:11). For the

sake of his own political ambition, Pilate condemned the real King (15:12–15). He released Barabbas, whose name means "son of a father," and he failed to protect Jesus, the Son of the Father. Now the innocent would die in the place of the guilty.

### THINK ABOUT IT

Barabbas was an anti-Roman insurrectionist guilty of robbery (John 18:40) and murder (Luke 23:19).



# Lesson Outline

*Jesus was unjustly abandoned and condemned.*



## AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

Love Jesus because . . .

1. He is the true Judge (14:53–65).
2. He is the faithful Friend (14:66–72).
3. He is the sinless King (15:1–14).
4. He is the sinless Sacrifice (15:15).



## AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. The Jews judged the true Judge (14:53–65).
  - The Sanhedrin found no testimony against Jesus (14:53–59).
  - Jesus claimed to be the Messiah and the Son of God (14:60–62).
  - The Sanhedrin convicted Jesus of blasphemy (14:63–65)
2. Peter denied his true Friend (14:66–72).
  - Peter denied Jesus three times (14:66–71).
  - Peter heard a rooster crow and wept (14:72).
3. Pilate handed over the true King (15:1–15).
  - Pilate was amazed Jesus would not defend Himself (15:1–5).
  - Pilate knew Jesus had done nothing wrong (15:6–14).
  - Pilate handed Jesus over and released Barabbas (15:15).





## Lesson Questions

*Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.*



### Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. What did Caiaphas ask Jesus?**  
Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One.
- 2. When asked if he was a follower of Jesus, what did Peter do?**  
He denied Jesus.
- 3. Did Pilate think Jesus had done anything wrong?**  
No.
- 4. Who did Pilate condemn, and who did he release?**  
He condemned Jesus and released Barabbas.



### Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. What was wrong with the accusations against Jesus?**  
They were false and inconsistent.
- 2. Did Jesus defend Himself?**  
No. There were no real charges. Besides, Jesus was not trying to escape death.
- 3. What kind of person is the Son of Man seated at God's right hand and coming with the clouds of heaven?**  
He is the supreme judge over all the earth.
- 4. Who was committing blasphemy?**  
Not Jesus, because He spoke the truth. The high priest was, because he was directly opposing the Son of God.
- 5. Did Peter speak the truth like Jesus did?**  
No. He lied three times.
- 6. Why did Peter burst into tears after the rooster crowed?**  
He remembered what Jesus had said, and he realized he had betrayed the One he loved most.
- 7. What did Pilate call Jesus?**  
The King of the Jews.
- 8. Why did Pilate not set Jesus free?**  
Pilate was more concerned about himself than about an innocent man. He valued his own political career more than the King of kings.

# Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

## FALSELY ACCUSED

Have you ever gotten in trouble for something that your brother or sister did? Did you try to tell your parents that you did not do it? Did you defend yourself? In the lesson today, people say that Jesus did something bad even though He didn't. Do you think Jesus will defend Himself?

## ROOSTER CROWS MUSICAL CHAIRS

Play a game of musical chairs. Choose a child or helper to stand with their back turned to the class. Tell them to crow like a rooster at any time they choose. When the other children hear the crow, they are to sit in a chair. The child who is left without a chair is out.



ILLUSTRATE

## UPSIDE-DOWN DAY

Jesus' condemnation is an upside-down story. Illustrate this by doing things backward: reverse the class schedule, have the children sit up front while you sit in their spot during the lesson introduction, wear your tie backward, sit in your chair backward, color with the opposite hand, walk backward, put your shoes on the wrong feet, etc.

## WHAT IS BLASPHEMY?

Blasphemy is saying things about God that are not right/true and using God's name to say things that are evil. Illustrate this by placing your hand over your mouth, showing that blasphemy is something that should not be said. Have the children put their hands over their mouths during the lesson when Jesus is blasphemed.



APPLY

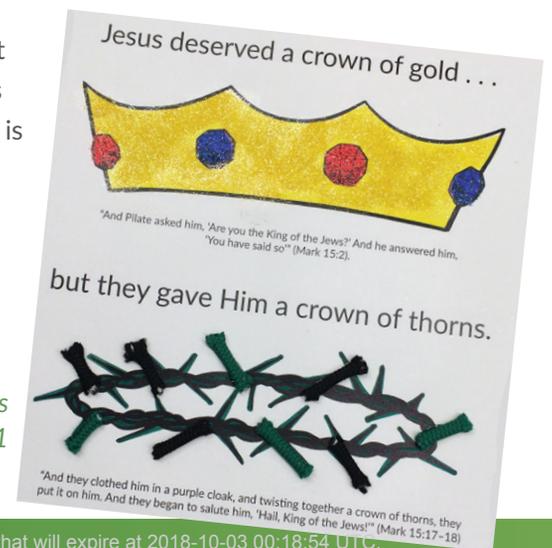
## CROWNS

See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*.

**Materials:** Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, glue stick, glitter glue, pipe cleaners.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color the images. Décor the crown gold with glitter (or sticker). Cut in pieces the pipe cleaners (black or brown) and glue the pieces on the crown of thorns.

Crowns  
See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*



# TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

The trial and denial of Jesus • Mark 14:53–15:15



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

## ROLE REVERSAL

Imagine a criminal who enters the courtroom acting as if he is the judge, not the criminal: He demands that all rise while he enters, wears a black judge's robe, sits in the judge's seat, and calls the courtroom to order. Meanwhile, the judge enters wearing handcuffs and an orange prison jumpsuit. Do you think justice would be done? Well, that is basically what happens in today's story. Let's find out why.

## FOR YOUR ENEMY?

Tell the heroic story of a soldier, policeman, or fireman who died to rescue another person. Ask the children to put themselves in this person's place: Would they be willing to give their life for someone else? Many of us would. But what if that person was our enemy? Would that change anything? It didn't for Jesus. Read Romans 5:6–8. In today's lesson, we will see that Jesus was willing to be unjustly condemned in order to rescue sinners.



ILLUSTRATE

## WHAT IS THE BIG DEAL?

Today's lesson contains a number of lies. Ask the children why it's wrong to lie: (1) the Bible says it is sin (Prov 6:16–19), and (2) all sin will be punished by God (Prov 11:21; Rev 20:13). But lying is an especially dangerous sin. Do the children know why? If you become comfortable with lying, you can become comfortable with any other sin. You can lie to yourself and others, justifying any evil behavior or desire.

## SCOURGED

Before being crucified, Pilate had Jesus scourged (Mark 15:15). This was a severe punishment, often resulting in death. Prisoners were beaten with whip that contained bits of metal or jagged bone at the end of leather strips. It caused massive amounts of bleeding and permanent disfigurement.



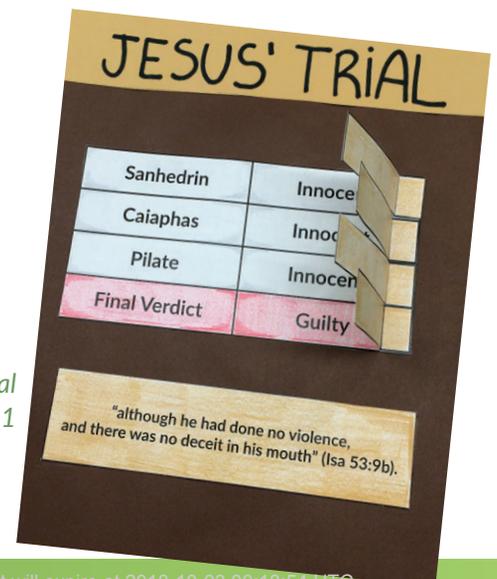
APPLY

## JESUS' TRIAL

See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*.

**Materials:** Craft sheet, brown copy paper, crayons, glue stick, scissors.

**Directions:** Color the table of names with crayons (use a different color for the "final verdict") and glue it on the brown copy paper. Glue each folding strip on each of the verdict so that it can open and close. Glue the verse at the bottom of the page and then write "Jesus' Trial" on the top of the page.



Jesus' Trial

See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*

AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

**IT WAS NOT ME!**

Have the children ever been blamed for doing something they did not do? How did they respond? More than likely, they passionately defended their innocence. In today's lesson, Jesus is charged with a serious crime—one deserving death. However, He remained silent before His accusers. Why would He do that? Let's find out.

**THE DEFINITION OF HYPOCRISY, PART 1**

Ask the children to explain what hypocrisy is. Explain that it is saying one thing and doing another. Then, ask them to give you some examples of hypocrisy. Tell the children that today's lesson contains one of the greatest examples of hypocrisy ever recorded in human history. Will the children be able to identify it? Have them listen for it as you teach today's lesson.



ILLUSTRATE

**PRESSURED BY PEERS**

Pilate knew Jesus was innocent (Mark 15:14; Matt 27:19, 24) and that the religious leaders had delivered Him over because they were jealous of Him (Mark 15:10). So why did Pilate still hand Jesus—a man he knew to be innocent—over to be scourged and crucified (Mark 15:15)? The answer is simple: peer pressure. Because of his precarious relationship with Rome, Pilate allowed himself to do something he knew was wrong. He placed his own reputation and political aspirations ahead of God. Have the children ever experienced peer pressure? How did they respond?

**THE DEFINITION OF HYPOCRISY, PART 2**

The Jewish religious leaders' condemnation of and blasphemy against Jesus is one of the saddest examples of hypocrisy ever recorded. The religious leaders, who went out of their way to obey even the smallest requirements of the Law (Matt 23:23–24), totally ignored three of the Ten Commandments when they falsely accused (Exod 20:16), blasphemed (20:7), and murdered (20:13) Jesus. They honored God with their lips, but their heart was far from Him (Matt 15:1–9).



APPLY

**NOT ME!**

It is easy to criticize Peter for denying Jesus. But when we begin to think about it, it is likely that we too have denied Jesus. Do you deny Jesus by the movies you watch and the websites you visit? What about the books and magazines you read? What about the places you go, or the things you do when there are no adults around? How about the words you say or the thoughts you think? And what about the things you know you should do but do not? Instead of criticizing Peter, let's learn a lesson from him. First, though we fail and deny Christ, we can be forgiven (1 John 1:9; John 21:15–17; 1 Pet 5:10). And second, we must pursue humility, because Satan easily devours proud people (1 Pet 5:5–8).



## LESSON 23

*Jesus endures the cross*

MARK 15:16-47



**Jesus died to save sinners.**



*“And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, ‘Truly this man was the Son of God!’” (Mark 15:39).*

## Supporting Truths

1. Jesus did not save Himself so that He could save others.
2. Jesus bore God’s wrath as He died.
3. Jesus is the Son of God.
4. Jesus was mocked as He died.
5. Jesus is Messiah and King.

## Objectives

1. Restate the chief priests’ insult.
2. Describe the darkness and Jesus’ cry.
3. Recite the key verse.
4. List all the ways Jesus was mocked and compare to Isaiah 53:3.
5. Explain that Jesus’ death and burial prove that all that was said in mockery actually turned out to be true.



## Lesson Summary

Jesus was cruelly mocked during His crucifixion. He was the true King and Son of God, and He was suffering the worst punishment for the sake of sinners, yet they just laughed at Him. Worst of all, the Father poured out His wrath on Jesus, counting Him as a sinner in the place of sinners. But in the end, there were still a few who honored Jesus, who saw that He really was the Son of God.

## Spotlight on the Gospel

The cross is at the center of the gospel. On the cross Jesus died to bear God's wrath and pay the penalty for sin. He did this for the sake of sinners, even wicked sinners who made a joke out of all His suffering. Because of His death, we have hope. We are no different than the cruel people who laughed at Him, but because He finished His mission, we can be forgiven. All that is required is that we respond in true faith and repentance.

LAST WEEK



The trial and denial of  
Jesus  
Mark 14:53–15:15

THIS WEEK



Jesus endures the cross  
Mark 15:16–47

NEXT WEEK



Jesus rises from the  
dead  
Mark 16:1–8

# Lesson Commentary

## *Jesus died to save sinners.*

The disciples were shocked by Jesus' mission (Mark 8:31–32). Yet His suffering and death should not have come as a surprise (Isa 53:3–5). Even the mockery Jesus endured was predicted years before His birth. In fact, the mockery, suffering, death, and burial all prove that He perfectly accomplished His mission as Messiah. He gave “his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45), the just for the unjust, in order that He might save sinners.

## Jesus was mocked in His crucifixion (15:16–32)

Jesus had already been *flogged, beaten with a whip that had pieces of bone or metal woven into it*. Flogging was so violent that many prisoners died from it. But instead of treating Jesus gently after that, the soldiers *mocked* Jesus. They *joked* about Jesus and *pretended to honor Him*. Giving Jesus a royal-looking robe, a crown of thorns, and a reed for a scepter, they mockingly bowed and said, “Hail, King!” copying the way they would say, “Hail, Caesar!” (15:18). To them, Jesus' royalty and suffering were just a big joke. They had fun beating Him, and with their

spit they dishonored Him (15:19). Ironically, what they meant as a joke was actually true: Jesus was the King. All the while, Jesus obeyed Scripture: “I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting” (Isa 50:6).

Weakened by the flogging, Jesus could not carry the beam of His cross, so the soldiers forced Simon of Cyrene to do it (Mark 15:21). Cyrene was a busy port city in North Africa where many Jews lived, but Simon was in Jerusalem, probably for Passover. Mark mentions Simon's sons because they must have been known to Christians in Rome where Mark wrote his gospel (Rom 16:13). It seems Simon's whole family was saved after Simon carried the Savior's cross.

Jesus was taken to *Golgotha*, which is Aramaic for *Skull Place*. We call it *Calvary* because the Latin

word for skull is *calvarium*. Along the way, Jesus was offered myrrh mixed in wine, which would help deaden the pain (Mark 15:23). This offer fulfilled prophecy (Ps 69:21), but Jesus refused it in order that He might be fully conscious during His death for sin. When He was crucified on Friday at 9 AM (Mark 15:24–25), He felt all the pain: the spikes through the forearms and heels, the shock of the post being dropped into the hole, and the rough wood scraping against His lacerated back as He heaved up and down to breath. It is perhaps the most painful form of execution.

But Mark focuses on the mockery instead of the pain. Crucifixion was itself mockery.

The Romans used it to execute slaves and rebels. The Jews considered a crucified person to be accursed (Deut 21:23). In addition, the soldiers dishonored Jesus by caring more about His clothes than about His life. Also, the inscription on the cross mocked Jesus. It was normal for the charges to accompany the crucified criminals, but in this case, it was a charge that no one actually believed (Mark 15:26). Finally, Jesus was mocked by being crucified alongside violent revolutionaries (15:27). Yet the mockery—the cross (Num 21:9), the divided clothes (Ps 22:18), and the company of wicked men (Isa 53:12)—actually confirmed that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

The Jews also mocked Him. Crucifixions took place by the busy road heading from Jerusalem toward the Roman capital of Caesarea. The many people traveling by shook their heads with scorn, and in “deriding” Him they were literally “blaspheming” (Mark 15:29). They continued to falsely accuse Him (15:29–30). The chief priests joined in, joking that they would believe if Jesus could get down off the cross (15:31–32). Even the criminals mocked Him, although one later repented (Luke 23:39–43). But again, the sneering proved that Jesus was exactly who He said He was (Ps 22:7). In fact, the reason He did not save Himself was so that He could save others (Mark 8:31; 10:45). All that was said in

### THINK ABOUT IT

The cross prolonged death in order to inflict the greatest amount of pain.



### THINK ABOUT IT

The soldiers' cruel mockery shows the wickedness present in every human heart (Jer 17:9).



mockery actually turned out to be true: Jesus was the King of the Jews, the King of Israel, the Messiah.

### Jesus was mocked in His abandonment (15:33–36)

From noon until 3 PM, the sun became dark (15:33). This was not a solar eclipse. Passover is always at full moon, so the moon was not between the sun and the earth. The darkness was supernatural, showing God's presence (Ps 18:11), especially His holy presence to judge (Isa 5:30; 13:10–11; Joel 2:1–2; Amos 5:20). Jesus was bearing God's wrath against sin, dying as a sinner in the place of sinners (1 Pet 2:24; 2 Cor 5:21). Jesus cried out, and for the first time in His life, He did not call God "Father" (Mark 15:34; Ps 22:1). Although the Trinity could not be ripped apart, the closeness and joy of their relationship was lost as God judged Jesus for the sins of many (Isa 53:5). He truly was forsaken so that sinners could be forgiven.

Yet even in this He was mocked (Mark 15:35–36). Possibly the bystanders only heard His first words, and in Aramaic "My God" and "Elijah" sound similar. But since Jesus was quoting a well-known verse, they may also

have purposefully twisted His words for fun. Either way, someone offered Him wine with vinegar, a drink popular with soldiers and laborers because it was invigorating. They wanted to keep Jesus conscious as they joked about Elijah coming.

### Jesus was honored in His death (15:37–47)

As they joked, Jesus' death proved He finished His mission. First, the thick curtain in the temple tore in a way that showed it was not done by human hands (15:38). Now the way into the Holy of Holies was open (Lev 16:2), for Jesus' death opens up access to God for all who believe in Him (Heb 10:19–22). Second,

the centurion, a soldier experienced in death and crucifixion, noticed that Jesus' cry was unusual (Mark 15:39). Normally, crucifixion victims died gradually and were too weak to shout in the end. Realizing that Jesus was not an ordinary man, the centurion became the first human in Mark's gospel to call Jesus the Son of God (15:39), confirming the main point of Mark's gospel (1:1). As the Son, Jesus died to bring many to the Father.

As the Gentile honored Jesus with his words, several women honored Him with their presence (15:40–41; John 19:25–27). They were Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:2), Mary the mother of James the son of Alphaeus (Mark 3:18), and Salome, the mother of James and John and the wife of Zebedee (Matt 20:20; 27:56). These women were faithful helpers, always there for Jesus. They were also faithful followers, and they kept following even to the place where Jesus was buried (Mark 15:47). Although not assigned leadership roles like the apostles, they are honored for faithfully serving Jesus.

After the Gentile and the women, a high-ranking member of the Sanhedrin honored Jesus. Joseph of Arimathea buried Jesus, rolling a stone in front of the tomb to keep thieves out (15:43–46). The stone was easy to roll in place but hard to roll away, since it rolled in a groove downhill to the entrance, but uphill away from the entrance. The burial itself honored Jesus as the prophesied Messiah (Isa 53:9), but it also showed how much Joseph honored Jesus. Joseph had already risked his reputation and life by opposing the Sanhedrin's verdict against Jesus (Luke 23:51). Now he also defiled himself twice, once by going right into a Gentile dwelling, and again by handling Jesus' dead body. He was willing to be unclean for Jesus, which is fitting, since Jesus was willing to be counted as a sinner for the sake of sinners like Joseph.

**THINK ABOUT IT**  
Jesus voluntarily surrendered His life to God (John 10:17–18).



**THINK ABOUT IT**  
Jesus bore our sins on the cross so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. His wounds heal us (1 Pet 2:24).

# Lesson Outline

*Jesus died to save sinners.*



## AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

Honor Jesus as your Messiah . . .

1. The people's mocking shows He is the Messiah (15:16–36).
2. Jesus' crucifixion shows He is the Messiah (15:20–28).
3. God's wrath shows He is the Messiah (15:33–34).
4. Jesus' death shows He is the Messiah (15:37–39).
5. Jesus' burial shows He is the Messiah (15:40–47).



## AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Jesus was mocked in His crucifixion (15:16–32).**
  - The soldiers beat, mocked, and crucified Jesus (15:16–28).
  - The people walking by mocked Jesus (15:29–30).
  - The chief priests and scribes mocked Jesus (15:31–32a).
  - The criminals mocked Jesus (15:32b).
2. **Jesus was mocked in His abandonment (15:33–36).**
  - Jesus bore God's wrath (15:33–34).
  - Bystanders mocked His agonizing cry (15:35–36).
3. **Jesus was honored in His death (15:37–47).**
  - The temple curtain tore as Jesus died (15:37–38).
  - The centurion honored Jesus as the Son of God (15:39).
  - The women honored Jesus by being with Him (15:40–41; John 19:25–27).
  - Joseph of Arimathea honored Jesus by burying Him (15:42–47).





## Lesson Questions

*Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.*



### Ages 3-5 Lesson Questions

- 1. What did the soldiers put on Jesus?**  
They dressed Him like a fake king, with a purple robe, a crown of thorns, and a reed scepter.
- 2. Who was Jesus crucified with?**  
Two criminals.
- 3. What happened to the sun when Jesus was on the cross?**  
It became dark.
- 4. What did the centurion call Jesus?**  
The Son of God.



### Ages 6-11 Lesson Questions

- 1. What kind of people were crucified?**  
Slaves, rebels, and cursed people.
- 2. What did the chief priests say to make fun of Jesus?**  
“He saved others. Let Him save Himself.”
- 3. What did all the mockery prove about Jesus?**  
It fulfilled Isaiah 53:3, so it proved Jesus was exactly who they were jokingly saying He was.
- 4. What did Jesus say while He was on the cross**  
“My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?”
- 5. What did the centurion notice that was strange about Jesus' death?**  
Jesus cried out loudly right before dying.
- 6. What happened in the temple when Jesus died?**  
The curtain blocking off the Holy of Holies was ripped in two from top to bottom.
- 7. Who stayed with Jesus as He died and was buried?**  
Faithful women.
- 8. How did Joseph of Arimathea honor Jesus?**  
He was willing to be unclean in order to give Jesus an honorable burial.

# Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

## ACCESS TO GOD

Bring in a first aid kit. Show it to the children, but put it in a place they cannot reach it. Ask them what they would do if there was an emergency and they needed to get it. They would need someone to get it for them. Explain that we all have an emergency; we are all desperately “sick” with sin. But we cannot heal ourselves. We need someone much greater than us to heal us—Jesus. The Bible says that by “his wounds we are healed” (Isa 53:5). What wounds are these? In today's lesson, we will find out how we may be healed by Jesus' wounds.

## MOCKING OR HONORING?

Make two signs before the lesson. One should represent mocking (angry face) and the other honoring (happy face). Talk about what it means to mock and to honor. Explain that today's lesson has some people that mock Jesus and others that honor Him. As you teach about these different people, hold up the correct sign telling the class if they mocked or honored Jesus. The children should respond by giving a “thumbs down” for those that mocked Jesus and a “thumbs up” for those that honored Jesus.



ILLUSTRATE

## SETTING THE SCENE

Using butcher paper on the wall, outline a large cross on a hill. Use this as a background during the lesson time to illustrate when Jesus was nailed to the cross. At the appropriate point in the lesson, hang a sign over the top of the cross that announces Jesus' crime. On another wall, use butcher paper to create a rocky mountain with a tomb opening. During the lesson when Jesus is buried, roll a large cardboard stone across the opening of the tomb. Consider using this again for next week's lesson when the stone is rolled away to remind the children that Jesus is risen.

## THE EVENTS OF THE CRUCIFIXION

Utilize the following props as you teach the lesson: whip, purple/scarlet fabric, long sharp thorns, vinegar, garments of clothing, long spikes, pictures of criminals, a cross, lights off, purple cloth, and stone.



APPLY

## PAID IT ALL

**Materials:** Black construction paper, yarn, crayons.

**Directions:** Trace your hand on the black paper. Color it with a white crayon. Make a red circle in the middle of the hand. Write, in white, under the hand “Paid it all”. Use the yarn to make a lace at the top of the page.



*Paid it all*

# TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus endures the cross • Mark 15:16–47



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

## STICKS AND STONES

Ask the children to finish the following phrase: “Sticks and stones may... (break my bones, but words will never hurt me).” Is that true? Absolutely not! Our words can do a lot to hurt or to heal. Have the children ever experienced mocking? How did they feel? How did they want to respond? In our lesson today, Jesus endures cruel mocking from soldiers, Pilate’s sign, the people, the religious leaders, and the criminals crucified alongside him. However, even though the mocking was cruel and unjust, He did not respond. We will find out why in today’s lesson.

## THE SUBSTITUTE

Pin something onto the wall or ceiling, higher than any child can reach. Tell the children that if they are unable to reach it themselves, they may ask anyone to do it for them. They will most likely ask one of the teachers. The teacher is their substitute! A substitute is someone who does something which you are unable to do, in your place, and on your behalf. Jesus died as our substitute. He paid the price for sin that we could never pay. That’s what our lesson is about today: Jesus, our great substitute.



ILLUSTRATE

## BUT WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE?

Crimes against the president receive a harsher punishment. Why is that? What if someone commits a crime against God? What kind of punishment should they receive? Death (Rom 6:23). Even one sin is worthy of eternal separation from God in hell (Jas 2:10) Why? Our sin is against an infinitely great and holy God. Any sin we commit is infinitely great because it is against an infinitely great God. This is why Jesus needed to die for sin. Only God’s Son could pay a big enough penalty to cover our sin.

## TORN IN TWO

Tear a sheet from top to bottom. Explain that the veil in the temple was 6 inches thick and 30 feet wide. It separated the priests from the presence of God in a room called the Holy of Holies. It was a visible symbol that man was separated from God. However, the moment Jesus died, there was a great earthquake. God split the curtain of the temple from top to bottom, symbolizing that all people now had access to God, not just the priests.



APPLY

## JESUS DIED FOR SIN

See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1.

**Materials:** Craft sheet, white paper plate, crayons, glue stick, scissors.

**Directions:** Color the plate, making sure that there is a field, a hill and the sky. Cut the half of the inside part of the plate. Cut the crosses. Color two of them in black. Glue the cross on the cut part of the plate, with the white cross in the middle.

Jesus Died for Sin  
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

**SUBSTITUTE**

Imagine a convicted murderer about to be put to death. The executioner asks if he has any last words, but before he can respond, someone bursts through the door. It is a man, but not just any man—it is the father of the girl murdered by the prisoner! Everyone is shocked and anxious. The room goes quiet. What do you think happens next? The father says calmly: “Remove this man from the chair. Let him go free. I will die in his place. I will pay the price of his crime.” Can you imagine this happening? The story we will hear today is even more unbelievable: The Son of God, Jesus, dies for the sins of His enemies (Rom 5:10).

**LAST WORDS**

Write Jesus’ last words on the board or on a poster board before the children arrive: “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” (Mark 15:34). Ask the children if they have ever heard this phrase before. What language is it (Aramaic)? Who said it? What does it mean? Explain that they were Jesus’ final words before He gave up His life on the cross. For the first time in Jesus’ life, He did not call God “Father.” Why not? We will find out in today’s lesson.



ILLUSTRATE

**LIVING ILLUSTRATION**

The two criminals crucified alongside Jesus joined in the mocking (Mark 15:32). Yet the Bible records that one of these men repented and trusted Jesus for the forgiveness of his sins. Read Luke 23:39–43. This repentant criminal is a living illustration of why Jesus voluntarily suffered and died on the cross: to save sinners. The one who spent his final hours mocking Jesus would that very day join Jesus in paradise.

**A RANSOM TO WHOM?**

Jesus gave “his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). Most children understand “ransoms” as they relate to kidnappings. Ask them what a ransom is and how it works. In a kidnapping, to whom is the ransom paid (the kidnapper). Explain that the way a ransom is used in a kidnapping does not accurately represent the ransom Jesus paid to free us from our sin. The “ransom” Jesus paid was not to Satan. It was paid to God to satisfy His anger against sin (Rom 3:24–25). It is God that is offended by our sins.



APPLY

**WHICH ONE ARE YOU?**

There are only two types of people in this world, and they are represented by the two criminals crucified alongside Jesus. Both mocked Jesus, and both were guilty of great crimes. They both deserved death. Yet while one man apparently kept mocking Jesus up to the moment of his death, the other called out to Jesus and received the gift of salvation (Luke 23:39–43). This repentant criminal joined Jesus in paradise that very day, while the other was eternally separated from Jesus’ presence. Which criminal are you? If you are the unrepentant criminal, call out to Jesus who graciously saves! If you are the repentant criminal, thank Him with your life for His incredible gift of grace.



## LESSON 24

*Jesus rises from the dead*

MARK 16:1-8



**Jesus is alive.**



***“Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him” (Mark 16:6).***

## Supporting Truths

1. The empty tomb shows Jesus is alive.
2. The empty tomb shows God’s awesome power at work in the real world.
3. The empty tomb causes fear and trembling.
4. The empty tomb shows Jesus conquered death and gives life.
5. The empty tomb shows God accepted Jesus’ sacrifice.

## Objectives

1. Recite Mark 16:6.
2. List the details of time, people, and place that show this really happened.
3. List several words to describe the women’s fear.
4. Explain the hope Jesus’ resurrection gave especially to Peter.
5. Discuss how the resurrection confirms Jesus’ payment for sin (Acts 17:31).



## Lesson Summary

All of Jesus' followers thought it was over. Perhaps they would see Him again in the next world, but not in this one. The women came to pour perfume over His corpse in the tomb. But it was empty. The stone was rolled aside and there was no body. Instead, an angel announced that He had risen and would meet them just as promised. The women rushed out, overcome with fear at the incredible truth: Jesus is alive.

## Spotlight on the Gospel

Jesus' death and resurrection must go together. If Jesus died but did not come back to life, then His death would be useless. But because He did come back to life, we know that His sacrifice was pleasing to God and fully paid the price for sin. He also conquered death, and He has life in Himself. To receive this life, we must come to Him in faith and obedience, trembling in awe before the great and powerful Son of God.

LAST WEEK



**Jesus endures the cross**  
*Mark 15:16-47*

THIS WEEK



**God forgives David**  
*Mark 16:1-8*

NEXT WEEK



**Jesus returns to heaven**  
*Acts 1:1-11*

# Lesson Commentary

## *Jesus is alive.*

Jesus was dead. He had been beaten (Mark 14:65), flogged (15:15), beaten again (15:19), crucified (15:24), and stabbed with a spear (John 19:34). Finally, His dead body was wrapped tight and secured inside a tomb (Mark 15:46). Jesus was dead, and dead people do not just *come back to life*. Or do they? We know Jesus did *rise from the dead*, but the women who first went to the tomb did not know that yet. We must join with these women and read the story the way they experienced it. When we do, we will see how awe-inspiring and fearful the *resurrection* really is.

### The women expected an occupied tomb (16:1–3)

The women did not expect Jesus to rise from the dead. If they had, they would not have come to anoint a dead body, nor would they have worried about the stone (16:1–3). They were concerned about the large stone because it had to be rolled up out of a depression in the rock to get it out of the way. This shows they expected everything to be the way it was left. They did not know about the guards or the seal (Matt 27:62–66), and they definitely did not expect a resurrection. The disciples didn't expect it either, since even after hearing news of resurrection, they did not believe it (Luke 24:11). The only ones who remembered that Jesus said He would rise on the third day were His enemies, and even they only expected some kind of trick (Matt 27:63–64).

Expecting to find a dead body, the women came to honor Jesus one more time. On Saturday night, after the Sabbath ended, they went and prepared spices (Luke 23:56). Since they intended to anoint Jesus, these spices were made into liquid perfume to pour over the body. This was to keep down the stench of rotting flesh. Nicodemus had already wrapped a large amount of dry spices with Jesus (John 19:39), but these devoted women wanted one last chance to honor Him.

After preparing the perfume, they woke up very early on Sunday, before dawn, and came to the tomb just as the sun was rising. The timing is important, since Jesus prophesied that He would rise on the third day (Mark 8:31). For Jews, “the second day” was tomorrow, and “the third day” was the day after tomorrow. Since Jesus was buried on Friday night and rose on Sunday morning, He rose on the third day just as He said. The details about time also show that this miracle really happened. This is not a myth. To celebrate this real event, Christians gather to worship on Sunday.

**THINK ABOUT IT**  
The resurrection is a true story of God breaking into human history.



### The women found an empty tomb (16:4–8)

Imagine their surprise when they found the tomb open (16:4)! Was this the wrong tomb? It couldn't be, because they had paid special attention to the place where Jesus was buried (15:47). They ducked down through the small door, but once inside they could stand up straight. Tombs like this one were family tombs, usually about 6 or 7 feet tall. There would be a bench carved in the stone where the dead body would lay for a year. After it decomposed, family members would put the bones in a bone box so that the bench could be used again later for the next corpse.

But instead of a stinking corpse, the women saw a brilliant angel, with white clothes dazzling like lightning (Matt 28:3). Angels are powerful heavenly warriors, so as usual, he had to tell them not to be afraid (Mark 16:6; Dan 10:12; Luke 1:13). He confirmed that this was the right place, but then He delivered unimaginable news: Jesus had risen from the dead. He showed them the empty stone bench. The tomb was clearly empty. Even the religious leaders could not dispute that. They had to make up a story about the body being stolen, because it was obvious to everyone that there was no body (Matt 28:11–15).

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON



## *Jesus rises from the dead • Mark 16:1-8*



**THINK ABOUT IT**  
“He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him” (Mark 16:6).

angel was there for three reasons. First, he gently rebuked the women for expecting to find a corpse (Luke 24:5). They should have remembered and believed what Jesus had promised (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34). Second, the angel came to explain. Although the empty tomb was a historical fact, the reality of what happened went beyond human experience. Nothing like it has ever happened before or since. So just as an angel announced the miraculous meaning of Jesus’ birth, so an angel announced the miracle of His resurrection. God broke into human history, so He sent this heavenly messenger to reveal what humans would not otherwise understand.

Third, the angel gave these women a mission (16:7). He especially mentioned Peter because Peter needed some encouragement. He needed to know that just as Jesus rightly predicted his denial, so He also rightly predicted new life and restoration (14:27-28). The women obeyed, although they were so stunned they spoke to no one along the way (16:8; Matt 28:8).



**THINK ABOUT IT**  
Even the disciples did not believe the women (Luke 24:11).

The first witnesses to the resurrection were women. But in Jewish culture, women’s testimony did not count. If the early church made up the resurrection story, they would never have said women were the first witnesses! The only explanation is that the gospels tell the story this way because it really happened this way. It also shows how women are honored in Scripture. The task of preaching the gospel and leading the church was for the apostles, but these faithful women received the good news first.

But if it was good news, why were they so terrified (Mark 16:8)? And why would the whole book end

with their fear? While some versions include eleven more verses in the book of Mark, the earliest and best manuscripts show that these verses were added later to make the ending feel less abrupt. But Mark purposefully ended the story with the same amazement and fear that people always felt toward Jesus (1:22, 27; 2:12; 4:41; 5:15, 33, 42; 6:51; 9:6, 15, 32; 10:24, 32; 11:18; 12:17; 15:5). It is like the time when Jesus calmed the storm: instead of being relieved, the disciples were more afraid than before (4:41)! This is how people feel when they have encountered God.

When the women saw the empty tomb and heard the angels’ message, they realized they were in the middle of the most remarkable act of God in history. They were so overwhelmed their bodies literally shook. That’s how they felt, that’s how Mark felt, and that is the emotion that you are to feel too, if you truly grasp what happened that day. When God raised Jesus from the dead, He showed He is real, powerful, and intimately involved in our world. It is not just about us. He is here, and He is so great, holy, awesome, and powerful that we feel as if we would simply be swallowed up. It takes our breath away, and we tremble.

Yet along with fear there can be great joy. Jesus’ resurrection proves that God accepted His sacrifice as the perfect payment for sin (Acts 17:31). Because Jesus conquered death, He is the resurrection and the life, and He is able to give new, eternal life to all who put their hope in Him (John 11:25). Without the resurrection, Jesus’ death would be useless, and our faith would be worthless (1 Cor 15:3, 12-20). But because He came back to life, we also will one day rise again with new, real, living bodies just like His (1 Cor 15:35-58). At that time we will live fully in the powerful presence of God forever.

**THINK ABOUT IT**  
Do you tremble before God?



# Lesson Outline

*Jesus is alive.*



## AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Dead people do not come back to life (16:1–3).
2. But Jesus came back to life (16:4–7).
3. So fear God, go, and tell others (16:8).



## AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. The women expected an occupied tomb (16:1–3).
  - They went to bring spices (16:1).
  - It was early Sunday morning (16:2).
  - They were worried about rolling the stone away (16:3).
2. The women found an empty tomb (16:4–8).
  - The stone was rolled away (16:4).
  - The women went into the tomb (16:5).
  - An angel said Jesus had risen from the dead (16:6–7).
  - The women were very afraid (16:8).





## Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



### Ages 3-5 Lesson Questions

- 1. When did the women go to the tomb?**  
On Sunday, the first day of the week, the day after the Sabbath.
- 2. Was Jesus' body in the tomb?**  
No.
- 3. What did the angel say about Jesus?**  
He is alive, He is not here.
- 4. What did the women feel when they heard that?**  
They were very afraid, trembling with fear.



### Ages 6-11 Lesson Questions

- 1. Why did the women go to Jesus' tomb?**  
They went to anoint His corpse with perfume.
- 2. What were the women worried about as they were on their way?**  
They wondered how they would move the stone.
- 3. So did the women expect Jesus to be alive?**  
No.
- 4. Who did the women see in the tomb?**  
An angel, looking like a young man dressed in shining white.
- 5. What did the angel tell them to do?**  
He told them to go and tell the other disciples, especially Peter.
- 6. Why did the angel mention Peter specifically?**  
To encourage Peter. Because Jesus was alive, his sin of denying Jesus could be forgiven, and Peter could be restored to Jesus.
- 7. How does Mark's gospel end?**  
With the words "for they were afraid."
- 8. Why were the women so afraid?**  
They realized that what had happened was more powerful than anything they had ever imagined.

# Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

## GOOD NEWS SPREADS

Tell the children that you are going to share some wonderful news with them. Play a game of telephone by whispering, “Jesus Christ is risen” into a child’s ear, and have him pass it along until the last child gets to announce the news to the entire class. In today’s lesson, we will learn about Jesus Christ rising from the dead, proving that His death provides forgiveness for sin.

## ONLY GOD CAN DO THAT

Bring a dead branch or plant to class. Can this branch/plant grow flowers or leaves? What can be done to make it come back to life? Explain that once things are dead, we cannot bring them back to life. But today we are going to hear about somebody rising from the dead. Who is able to do that? Can you guess who God raised from the dead?



ILLUSTRATE

## A BOXED TOMB

Wrap a doll or action figure in cloth and place it in a box. Close the box and seal it with packing tape. Post a guard, either by drawing men onto the box or setting other dolls or action figures around it. This will help the children visualize how the chief priests and Pharisees made the tomb secure (Matt 27:66). Be sure to emphasize that it is impossible for the doll to get out without a miraculous display of divine power.

## SPICES

The women bought spices so they could anoint Jesus’ body for burial (Mark 16:1). They were serving Jesus by making sure His body was ready for the tomb. Bring in some sweet-smelling potpourri, and allow the children to take turns smelling it.



APPLY

## HE IS RISEN

**Materials:** Plate, gray construction paper, green construction paper, brad, scissor, tape.

**Directions:** Cut in half the plate. Make a semicircle at the center of the plate. Color the plate. Cut a big circle on the gray construction paper and attach it with a brad to the plate. Tape a piece of gray construction paper in the back of the plate where is the semicircle and write “He is Risen”. Add bushes around with the green construction paper.

*He is Risen*



# TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus rises from the dead • Mark 16:1–8



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

## PLAYING POSSUM

The possum has an incredible ability to play dead. Show the children a brief video clip of a possum playing dead (many short videos are available on the internet). In today's lesson, we are going to learn that Jesus rose from the dead. However, there are some who believe that Jesus was just "playing possum." But as we will see today, this is not true. Jesus actually died and rose from the dead three days later.

## GAME OVER?

What's the children's favorite game to play? Have they ever won a game when it looked almost certain that they would lose? We always hold out hope of winning until the game is over. But what about when it's over? Is there any hope of winning then? Nope. It's game over. That is where Jesus' followers were at after He was crucified. It appeared that all hope was lost. It looked like the forces of evil had won. It looked like game over. But then, something amazing happened: Jesus rose from the dead! The game was not over. What looked like certain defeat was actually victory!



ILLUSTRATE

## BACK FROM THE DEAD

Tear a picture into tiny pieces and place them in a bag. Ask the children if any of them can put their hand in the bag and pull the picture out whole and perfect. Have some children try to do it. But that is exactly what God did. Have an identical, untornd picture taped to the side of the bag (cover the picture with your hand as the children reach into the bag). Pull this picture out, to their amazement. This is only an illusion, but God actually raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him a new, glorified body.

## ACCEPTABLE PAYMENT

Tell the children you went to buy something yesterday, but weren't able to because the salesman wouldn't accept your payment. You are puzzled because you had more than enough money. Offer to show the children the money. Pull out some foreign currency and begin counting it up in front of them. How can we be certain God accepted Jesus' payment for sin on the cross? The resurrection. It proves that God accepted His sacrifice as the perfect payment for sin (Acts 17:31).



APPLY

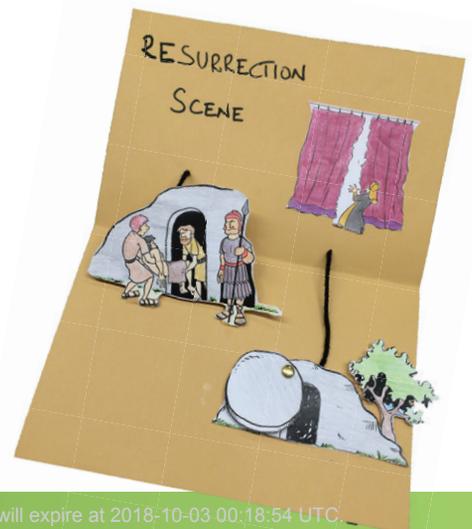
## BURIAL AND RESURRECTION SCENE

See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*.

**Materials:** Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, tan construction paper, tape, scissors, yarn, brad.

**Directions:** Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color the three images, and cut them. Fold the construction paper in 2. Glue the "curtain" image on the top half. Cut a slip on the construction paper so that both the "burial" and the "empty tomb" scene could stand. Use a piece of yarn to help the images stand.

*Burial and Resurrection Scene*  
See *Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*



AGES 9–11



### THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

Have you ever been in the presence of something powerful? Maybe you were walking through the woods, coming around a corner, and came nearly face to face with a bear? Or maybe after walking to the top of a hill, you realized you were right on the edge of a massive cliff? Or maybe you heard thunder close by and realized that lightning had struck very near you? This is kind of like what the women experienced when they went to Jesus' tomb: they realized they were in the presence of something far more powerful than anything they had ever experienced.

### VICTORY CELEBRATIONS

What are some of the ways sports teams celebrate special victories: (1) They run and huddle together, piling on each other, (2) pour Gatorade over their coach, (3) throw their hands up in the air, (4) hold up their index finger, (5) or carry their coach or another player off on their shoulders? These moments are often captured by photographers and aired on the nightly news or run in the next day's newspaper. They give evidence of victory. As does the resurrection. It proves Jesus' victory over sin.



### THE FINALITY OF DEATH

Have any of the children ever had a pet die? Have any of them ever lost a family member or friend? Death is so painful because we know we will never see that animal or person again in this life. There is nothing we can do to bring them back. And that is what makes the resurrection so amazing—Jesus came back from the dead! His followers would not need to wait until heaven to see Him. He was there! On earth! Alive again!

### SELECTIVE HEARING

Do any of the children have selective hearing? They hear only what they want, ignoring the rest? This kind of hearing often gets us in trouble, especially with our parents and teachers. Part of showing respect is carefully listening to everything someone says. The disciples had selective hearing. Jesus had told them on numerous occasions that He would rise from the dead (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34), but they didn't listen. In fact, the disciples still didn't believe that Jesus had risen from the dead even after the women told them He did (Luke 24:11).



### SUPPRESSING THE TRUTH

The chief priests and the Pharisees wanted to make sure that Jesus' disciples did not fabricate His resurrection, so they secured and sealed the tomb with Pilate's permission (Matt 27:62–66). Roman guards were placed outside the tomb to protect it from grave-robbing disciples. Everything that was humanly possible was done to prevent the resurrection of Christ. But rather than stopping Jesus' body from being stolen, it provided witnesses and an even more spectacular demonstration of Christ's resurrection. Yet the religious leaders still denied the resurrection (28:11–15). In the book of Romans, Paul writes that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth" (Rom 1:18). To "suppress the truth" means to deny something even though you know it to be true. How did the religious leaders "suppress the truth"? What does Paul say is the consequence for "suppressing the truth"?