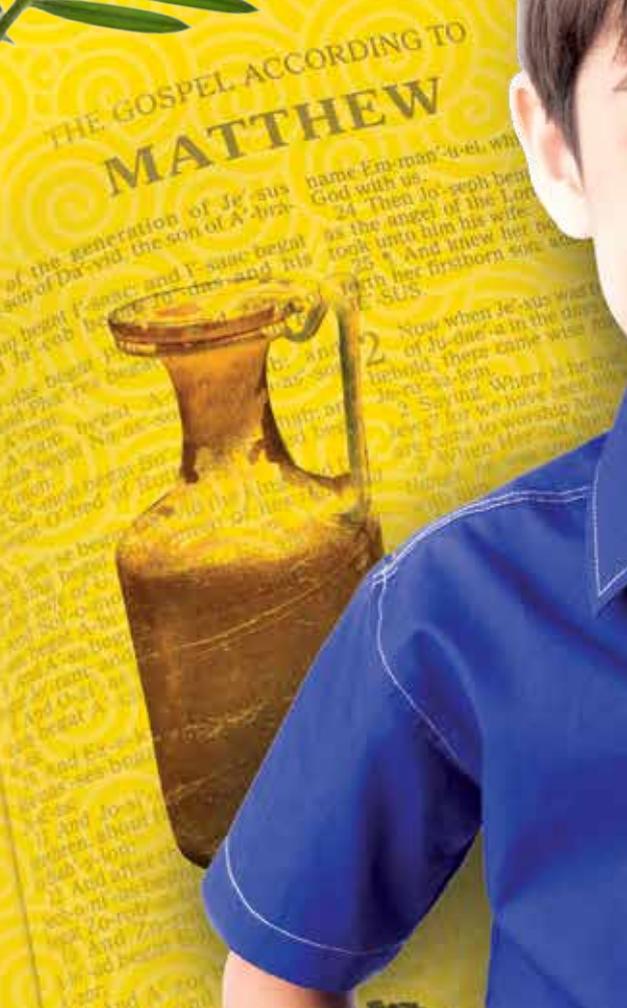




OLDER KIDS

Explore the Bible.

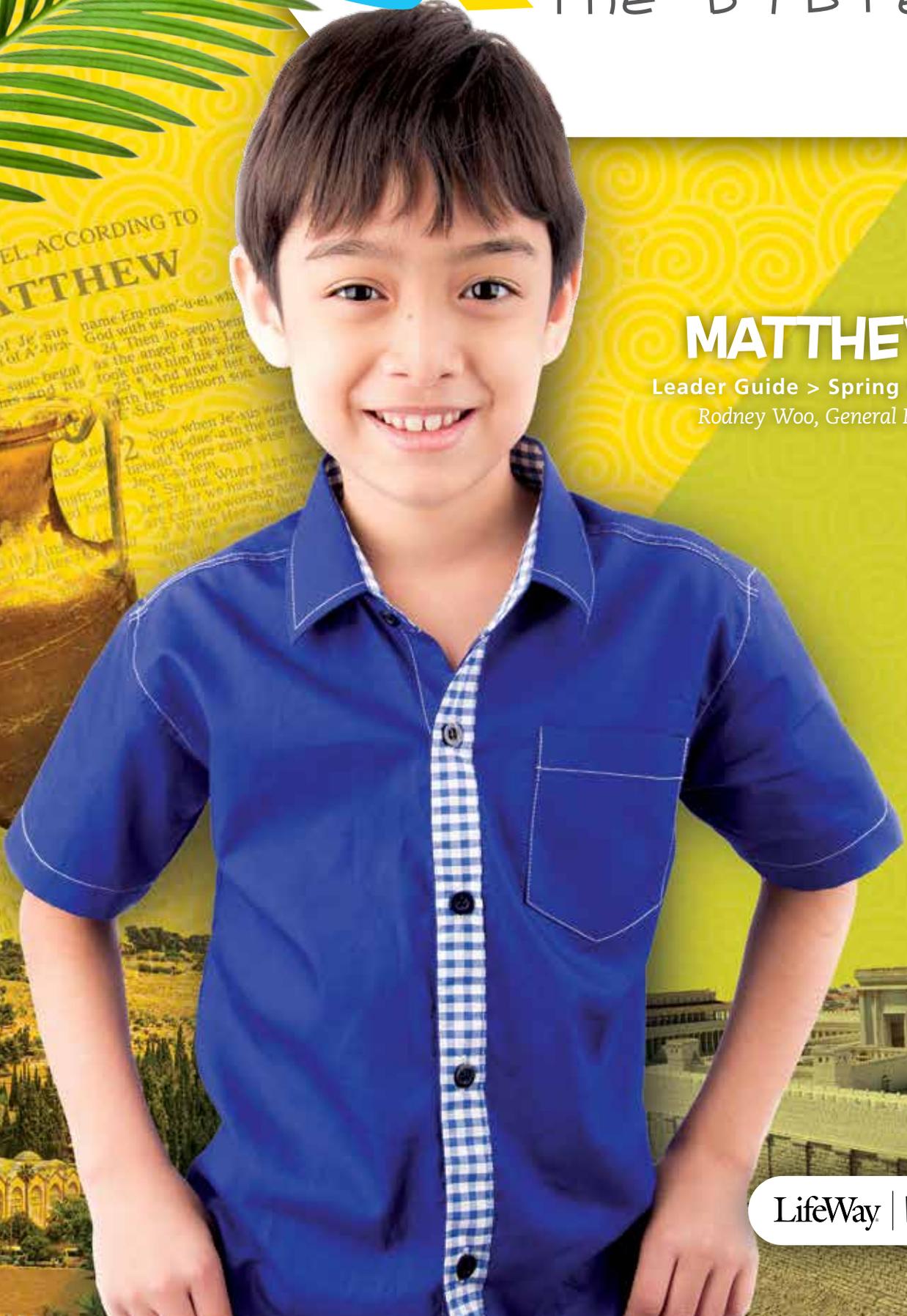


THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
MATTHEW

MATTHEW

Leader Guide > Spring 2017

Rodney Woo, General Editor



QUARTER OVERVIEW

SPRING 2017

THE KING

Jesus is the King that God promised to send. People recognized Jesus as someone special, but many failed to realize His true identity. Kids will hear of Peter's confession, learn about the transfiguration, hear a story of how Jesus wants people to respond to Him, and learn of His entry into Jerusalem as He was praised as king.

MATTHEW (PART 2)

Since the end of the Book of Matthew deals primarily with the end of Jesus' life, girls and boys will dive deep into Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and the events which led up to and surrounded it.

THE REASON

Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for the sins of all people. Kids will learn that Judas agreed to betray Jesus for a small sum of money, Jesus prayed in the garden for His disciples, Peter denied Jesus, and Jesus rose from the dead and gave His disciples and all people a commission to fulfill.

THE PASSION

After Jesus entered Jerusalem, He told parables to the people that identified what He would accomplish. Girls and boys will hear the parables of the vineyard owner and the banquet. Kids will also learn of Jesus' death and resurrection and His promise to return.

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EXPLORE THE BIBLE: OLDER KIDS LEADER GUIDE

Spring 2017

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We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. To review LifeWay's doctrinal guideline, please visit lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

This study of Matthew was written by Dr. Carrie Beth Douglas. Carrie serves in the ministry of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Parrish, FL.

AT A GLANCE

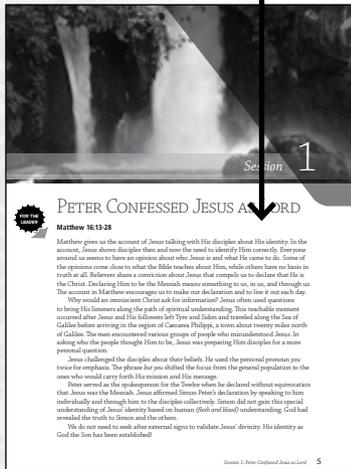
SESSION	SUGGESTED FOR THE WEEK OF	CORE PASSAGE	TEXT TRUTH
1	Mar. 5	Matthew 16:13-28	Jesus is the only Son of God. He is the Messiah.
2	Mar. 12	Matthew 17:1-13	Jesus is the Son of God and superior to Moses, Elijah, and all other prophets.
3	Mar. 19	Matthew 19:16-26	We cannot earn salvation. It is a gift we receive when we trust in Jesus.
4	Mar. 26	Matthew 21:1-11	Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.
5	Apr. 2	Matthew 21:33-45	Some people will reject God's Son, Jesus.
6	Apr. 9	Matthew 22:1-14	God invites everyone to repent and have faith in Jesus.
7	Apr. 16	Matthew 28:1-15	Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!
8	Apr. 23	Matthew 24:36-51	We should faithfully serve God while we wait for Jesus to return.
9	Apr. 30	Matthew 26:17-30	The Last Supper demonstrated a new covenant where Jesus would make the final sacrifice for sin.
10	May 7	Matthew 26:36-46	Jesus obeyed God's plan to rescue us from sin.
11	May 14	Matthew 26:65-75	Everyone (<i>except Jesus!</i>) is guilty of sin.
12	May 21	Matthew 27:41-52*	Jesus' redemption covers all of our sin.
13	May 28	Matthew 28:16-20	Go everywhere and tell everyone the good news of Jesus.

	BIBLE STORY	MEMORY VERSE
	Who Is Jesus? (<i>Matthew 16:13-16,20-25</i>)	Matthew 16:24
	Jesus, Moses, and Elijah (<i>Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36</i>)	Matthew 17:5
	The Rich Young Ruler (<i>Matthew 19:16-26; Mark 10:17-30; Luke 18:18-30</i>)	Matthew 19:26
	Jesus Entered Jerusalem (<i>Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11,15-18; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-19</i>)	Matthew 21:9
	The Parable of the Vineyard Owner (<i>Matthew 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12</i>)	1 John 5:12
	The Parable of the Wedding Banquet (<i>Matthew 22:1-14</i>)	Romans 10:13
	Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection (<i>Matthew 27:11-52; 28:1-15</i>)	Matthew 28:6
	Jesus Will Return One Day (<i>Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-8</i>)	Matthew 24:42
	The Last Supper (<i>Matthew 26:17-30; John 13:1-15</i>)	Luke 22:19
	Jesus in Gethsemane (<i>Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:40-46</i>)	Matthew 26:39
	Peter Denied Jesus (<i>Matthew 26:31-35,69-75; Mark 14:66-72</i>)	Romans 3:23
	Jesus Ate with the Disciples (<i>John 21:1-19</i>)	John 3:16
	Jesus Gave a Mission (<i>Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:6-8</i>)	Matthew 28:19-20

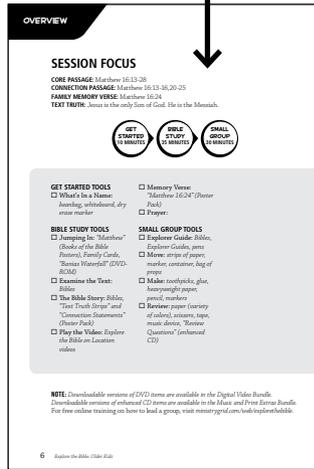
GET TO KNOW YOUR LEADER GUIDE

The weekly session plan is your tool for leading great Bible explorations. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

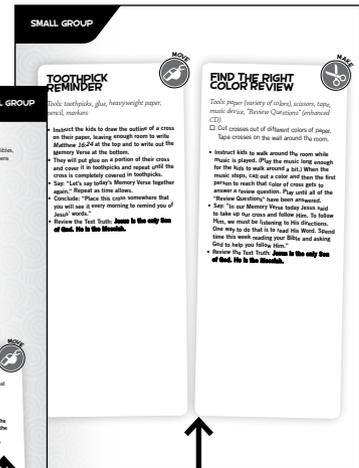
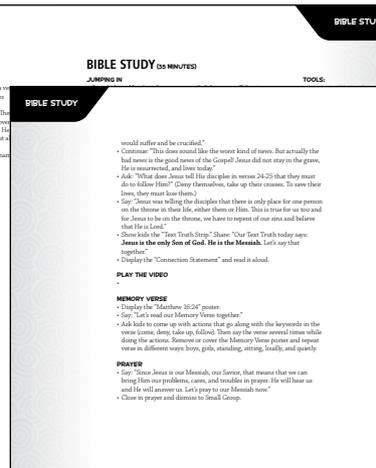
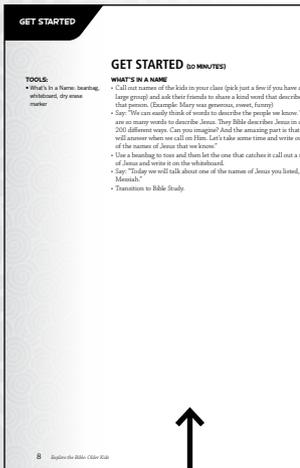
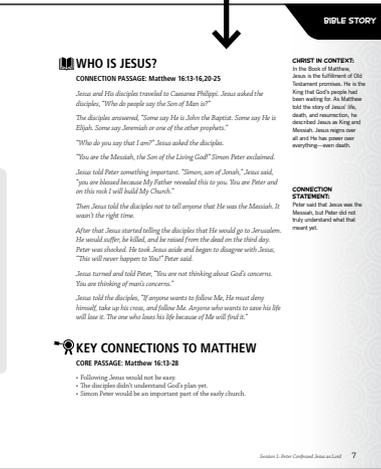
CORE PASSAGE BIBLE STUDY FOR LEADERS



QUICK LOOK AT THE SESSION



POINTS TO MAKE AND THE BIBLE STORY



GET THE SESSION STARTED.

LEAD KIDS THROUGH BIBLE STUDY.

USE THE ACTIVITIES TO APPLY THE TEXT TRUTH.

Check out page 109 for more information about your Leader Guide!

PETER CONFESSED JESUS AS LORD



FOR THE
LEADER

Matthew 16:13-28

Matthew gives us the account of Jesus talking with His disciples about His identity. In the account, Jesus shows disciples then and now the need to identify Him correctly. Everyone around us seems to have an opinion about who Jesus is and what He came to do. Some of the opinions come close to what the Bible teaches about Him, while others have no basis in truth at all. Believers share a conviction about Jesus that compels us to declare that He is the Christ. Declaring Him to be the Messiah means something to us, in us, and through us. The account in Matthew encourages us to make our declaration and to live it out each day.

Why would an omniscient Christ ask for information? Jesus often used questions to bring His listeners along the path of spiritual understanding. This teachable moment occurred after Jesus and His followers left Tyre and Sidon and traveled along the Sea of Galilee before arriving in the region of Caesarea Philippi, a town about twenty miles north of Galilee. The men encountered various groups of people who misunderstood Jesus. In asking who the people thought Him to be, Jesus was preparing His disciples for a more personal question.

Jesus challenged the disciples about their beliefs. He used the personal pronoun *you* twice for emphasis. The phrase *but you* shifted the focus from the general population to the ones who would carry forth His mission and His message.

Peter served as the spokesperson for the Twelve when he declared without equivocation that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus affirmed Simon Peter's declaration by speaking to him individually and through him to the disciples collectively. Simon did not gain this special understanding of Jesus' identity based on human (*flesh and blood*) understanding. God had revealed the truth to Simon and the others.

We do not need to seek after external signs to validate Jesus' divinity. His identity as God the Son has been established!

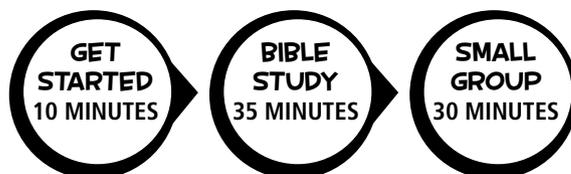
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 16:13-28

CONNECTION PASSAGE: Matthew 16:13-16,20-25

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 16:24

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus is the only Son of God. He is the Messiah.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- What's In a Name: *beanbag, whiteboard, dry erase marker*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: "Matthew" (*Books of the Bible Posters*), *Family Cards*, "Banias Waterfall" (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: *Bibles*, "The Ministry of Jesus Map" (Poster Pack)
- The Bible Story: *Bibles*, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements" (Poster Pack)

- Play the Video: *Explore the Bible on Location videos*

- Memory Verse: "Matthew 16:24" (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: *Bibles*, *Explorer Guides*, *pens*
- Move: *strips of paper*, *marker*, *container*, *bag of props*

- Make: *toothpicks*, *glue*, *heavyweight paper*, *pencil*, *markers*

- Review: *paper (variety of colors)*, *scissors*, *tape*, *music device*, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

WHO IS JESUS?

CONNECTION PASSAGE: Matthew 16:13-16,20-25

Jesus and His disciples traveled to Caesarea Philippi. Jesus asked the disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

The disciples answered, “Some say He is John the Baptist. Some say He is Elijah. Some say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.”

“Who do you say that I am?” Jesus asked the disciples.

“You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God!” Simon Peter exclaimed.

Jesus told Peter something important. “Simon, son of Jonah,” Jesus said, “you are blessed because My Father revealed this to you. You are Peter and on this rock I will build My Church.”

Then Jesus told the disciples not to tell anyone that He was the Messiah. It wasn’t the right time.

After that Jesus started telling the disciples that He would go to Jerusalem. He would suffer, be killed, and be raised from the dead on the third day. Peter was shocked. He took Jesus aside and began to disagree with Jesus. “This will never happen to You!” Peter said.

Jesus turned and told Peter, “You are not thinking about God’s concerns. You are thinking of man’s concerns.”

Jesus told the disciples, “If anyone wants to follow Me, He must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. Anyone who wants to save his life will lose it. The one who loses his life because of Me will find it.”

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Peter said that Jesus was the Messiah, but Peter did not truly understand what that meant yet.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 16:13-28

- Following Jesus would not be easy.
- The disciples didn’t understand God’s plan yet.
- Simon Peter would be an important part of the early church.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- What's In a Name: beanbag, whiteboard, dry erase marker

WHAT'S IN A NAME

- Call out names of the kids in your class (*pick just a few if you have a very large group*) and ask their friends to share a kind word that describes that person. (*Example: Mary is generous, sweet, funny*)
- Say: “We can easily think of words to describe the people we know. There are so many words to describe Jesus. The Bible describes Jesus in over 200 different ways. Can you imagine? And the amazing part is that He will answer when we call on Him. Let’s take some time and write out all of the names of Jesus that we know.”
- Toss a beanbag to the kids. Let the kid who catches the beanbag call out a name of Jesus and write it on the whiteboard.
- Say: “Today we will talk about one of the names of Jesus—Messiah.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Greet kids and let them know you are glad they came. Take time to go over the “Matthew” poster and re-familiarize kids with this book of the Bible.
- Distribute Family Cards.
- Say: “I will distribute these cards every week. The cards will always have a special object and interesting facts about it for us to discuss. Then you can take these cards home and use them to talk with your family about the Bible story and what you learned. Let’s look at this week’s card.”
- Introduce the object. Display the “Banias Waterfall” visual.
- Say: “It is neat to be able to imagine what the area was like that Jesus and His disciples traveled in and through.”
- Ask: “Have any of you ever been to a waterfall? What was it like?” Allow for responses.
- Continue: “This waterfall is near the site of a very significant conversation between Jesus and His followers. It was here that Jesus asked them who they thought He was. It was a very important encounter for Peter. Let’s get into our Bible story and find out why!”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Display “The Ministry of Jesus Map” and point out Caesarea Philippi.
- Encourage the kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 16.
- Ask for a volunteer to read verses 13-15.
- Describe: “Pretend you are a disciple listening to Jesus ask these questions. Think of what you know about Him so far. It is easy for us to answer these questions since we have the whole Bible to read and learn from about Jesus. At this point, Jesus had not gone to the cross, arose, or ascended back into heaven.”
- Ask: “Raise your hand and tell me how you think you would have answered this question, ‘Who do you say that I am?’” Allow for responses.
- Say: “Let’s read how Peter answered and what happened after this.”
- Ask for a volunteer to read verses 16-20.
- Say: “Peter’s confession of Jesus is a big deal! People were waiting and watching for the Messiah, the Son of God. People did not realize that Jesus is the Messiah—not even some of His family or followers understood this. People today still do not know who Jesus is. Some will say that He is a good teacher or a famous religious leader. We need to be like Peter and tell them that He is the Christ, the Son of God!”

THE BIBLE STORY

- Tell the rest of the Bible story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Ask: “Have you ever been given some bad news that you did not want to

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: “Matthew” (*Books of the Bible Posters*), Family Cards, “Banias Waterfall” (*DVD-ROM*)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “The Ministry of Jesus Map” (*Poster Pack*)
- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (*Poster Pack*)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 16:24” (*Poster Pack*)

hear or believe? That is what Peter felt like when Jesus told him that He would suffer and be crucified.”

- Continue: “This does sound like the worst kind of news. But actually the bad news is the good news of the gospel! Jesus did not stay in the grave. He is resurrected, and lives today.”
- Ask: “What does Jesus tell His disciples in verses 24-25 that they must do to follow Him?” (*Deny themselves, take up their crosses. To save their lives, they must lose them.*)
- Say: “Jesus was telling the disciples that there is only place for one person on the throne (*in charge*) in their life, either them or Him. This is true for us too and for Jesus to be on the throne, we have to repent of our sins and believe that He is Lord.”
- Show kids the “Text Truth Strip.”
- Share: “Our Text Truth today says: **Jesus is the only Son of God. He is the Messiah.** Let’s say that together.”
- Display the “Connection Statement” and read it aloud.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 1” video.
- Ask: “What was the great question that Jesus asked His disciples? How would you answer Kaileigh’s question, ‘Who do you say that Jesus is?’”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 16:24” poster.
- Say: “Let’s read our Memory Verse together.”
- Ask kids to come up with actions that go along with the keywords in the verse (*come, deny, take up, follow*). Then say the verse several times while doing the actions. Remove or cover the Memory Verse poster and repeat the verse in different ways: boys, girls, standing, sitting, loudly, and quietly.

PRAYER

- Say: “Since Jesus is our Messiah, our Savior, that means that we can bring Him our problems, cares, and troubles in prayer. He will hear us and He will answer us. Let’s pray to our Messiah now.”
- Close in prayer and dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Guide boys and girls to locate today's pages in the Explorer Guide.
- Help kids to examine the Scriptures in "Who Jesus Said He Was."
- Review the Bible story and Text Truth. Invite girls and boys to write their answer in "What Do You Think?" Allow kids to share aloud their thoughts.
- Ask for volunteers to read aloud the information about the Baniyas Waterfall, Caesarea Philippi, and the name *Messiah*.
- Help boys and girls to pronounce today's "Word to Know."

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

PRAYER TIME

- Have kids pray sentence prayers praising Jesus using one of His names written on the whiteboard. (example: "Jesus, thank You for being my Shepherd and guiding me.")

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

WHO I AM

Tools: strips of paper, marker, container, bag of props

- Prepare strips of paper with names of well-known Bible people and place in a container. Collect props that correspond to these people. (Examples: shepherd staff, crown, a scroll, and so on.)

- Say: "In today's Bible story Peter answered Jesus' question, 'Who do you say that I am?' Let's play a game of charades and discover the identity of other people in the Bible."
- Ask for a volunteer to pull a name from the container, pick a prop, and then act out their Bible person. The rest of the group can guess who they are pretending to be. The first person to guess correctly gets to be the next "actor." Continue until all of the names are chosen.
- Say: "Our Text Truth today says that **Jesus is the only Son of God. He is the Messiah.** We do not have to wonder who Jesus is, we have His Word to tell us all about Him. Let's say our Text Truth together."



TOOTHPICK REMINDER



Tools: toothpicks, glue, heavyweight paper, pencil, markers

- Instruct the kids to draw the outline of a cross on their paper, leaving enough room to write *Matthew 16:24* at the top and to write out the Memory Verse at the bottom.
- They will put glue on a portion of their cross and cover it in toothpicks and repeat until the cross is completely covered in toothpicks.
- Say: "Let's say today's Memory Verse together again." Repeat as time allows.
- Conclude: "Place this cross somewhere that you will see it every morning to remind you of Jesus' words."
- Review the Text Truth: **Jesus is the only Son of God. He is the Messiah.**

FIND THE RIGHT COLOR REVIEW



Tools: paper (variety of colors), scissors, tape, music device, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)

- Cut crosses out of different colors of paper. Tape crosses on the wall around the room.
- Instruct kids to walk around the room while music is played. (*Play the music long enough for the kids to walk around a bit.*) When the music stops, call out a color and then the first person to reach that color of cross gets to answer a review question. Play until all of the "Review Questions" have been answered.
- Say: "In our Memory Verse today Jesus said to take up our cross and follow Him. To follow Him, we must be listening to His directions. One way to do that is to read His Word. Spend time this week reading your Bible and asking God to help you follow Him."
- Review the Text Truth: **Jesus is the only Son of God. He is the Messiah.**



THE TRANSFIGURATION

Matthew 17:1-13

Although Peter acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, the seasoned fisherman did not completely comprehend who Jesus was. Matthew wrote about an encounter with Jesus that made a lasting impression on three of His disciples, one of them being Peter. The event took place on a mountain in the region of Caesarea Philippi, north of Galilee. The encounter left the disciples with a new insight into Jesus' reign.

Gospel writers Matthew and Mark mention that this event took place six days after the confrontation in Caesarea Philippi, which we studied last week (*Matt. 16:13-28*). Luke included a period of eight days. Jesus only took Peter, James, and John with Him on this journey. Generally, other disciples followed along with the Twelve as Jesus traveled. For this experience, however, Jesus wanted only these three.

The disciples must have been amazed at the sight before them. They witnessed Jesus' power, but nothing prepared them for this experience. When Moses and Elijah appeared alongside Jesus, the disciples were overwhelmed. Instead of watching and listening, Peter interrupted this holy moment. Peter did not recognize the full significance of what he was seeing. The Father intervened in the occasion to declare Jesus' unique status. Christ was no equal to Moses and Elijah; He was their superior and their Lord.

Jesus' purpose in the Transfiguration was to give the disciples additional evidence as they witnessed for Him after the resurrection. The disciples could declare with assuredness that the One whom God had raised was both Lord and Christ (*Acts 2:36*).

Many wonders can attract our attention. We can be amazed at the splendors of nature. We might be awestruck at the acts of God in people's lives. We may revel in worshipful music. Yet, nothing and no one deserves our focus like Jesus. May we live in constant awareness of the glory of God in Christ and demonstrate our reverence in our worship and in our lives.

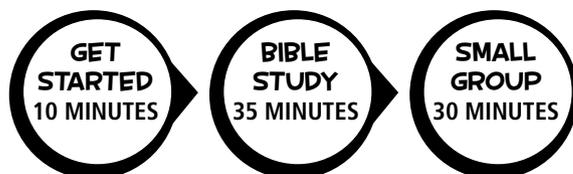
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 17:1-13

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 17:5

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus is the Son of God and superior to Moses, Elijah, and all other prophets.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Get In Shape Review:** construction paper, “Matthew Review Questions” (enhanced CD), scissors, glue, pencils, pieces of paper, candy (optional), “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD, if using candy)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In:** Family Cards, “Church of the Transfiguration” (DVD-ROM)

- The Bible Story:** Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)

- Examine the Text:** Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)

- Play the Video:** Explore the Bible on Location videos

- Memory Verse:** “Matthew 17:5” (Poster Pack)

- Prayer:** “The Disciples” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide:** Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

- Make:** CDs or DVDs, fishing line, permanent markers (variety of colors), large sheets of paper

- Move:** “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), white balloon

- Drama:** paper, pens, pretend microphones, Bible times clothing (optional)

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

JESUS, MOSES, AND ELIJAH

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36

Jesus took three of His disciples—Peter, James, and his brother John—up on a high mountain. Jesus began to pray. Suddenly Jesus was transformed. His face shone like the sun. His clothes became as white as light. They were so white that no one doing laundry on earth could get them this white! Then, Moses and Elijah appeared and talked with Jesus.

Peter told Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here! If You want me to, I will make three tabernacles here—one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” Peter was scared and didn’t really know what to say.

While Peter was talking, a bright cloud covered them and a voice from the cloud spoke, “This is My beloved Son. I take delight in Him. Listen to Him!”

The disciples were terrified and they fell facedown on the ground.

Jesus came and touched the disciples. “Do not be afraid,” He said.

Peter, James, and John looked around. They only saw Jesus. Jesus told them, “Don’t tell anyone about this until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.”

The disciples had questions, “Why do the religious leaders say that Elijah must come before the Messiah comes?”

Jesus explained, “Elijah has already come and they didn’t recognize him. They did what they wanted to him. The Son of Man will also suffer because of them.”

Peter, James, and John now understood that Jesus was talking about John the Baptist.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

God affirmed that Jesus is His Son and the disciples should listen to Him.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE:

Matthew 17:1-13

- God’s words here echo His words at Jesus’ baptism.
- Jesus is the Son of God.
- Jesus told His disciples that He would suffer, die, and be raised from the dead. The disciples didn’t really understand what all of that meant.
- The Old Testament prophet, Malachi, told of a man who would come before the Messiah. That man was John the Baptist. The religious leaders did not believe John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus, the Messiah.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Get In Shape Review: construction paper, “Matthew Review Questions” (*enhanced CD*), scissors, glue, pencils, pieces of paper, candy (*optional*), “Allergy Alert” (*enhanced CD, if using candy*)

GET IN SHAPE REVIEW

- Before class begins, cover or remove the “Matthew” poster. Cut out different shapes from construction paper (*heart, cross, book, and so forth*). Print the “Matthew Review Questions.” Cut apart the questions and glue one to each shape. Hide the shapes around the room.
- Give each kid (*or consider letting them work in pairs*) a piece of paper and pencil and ask them to number it 1-11. Instruct kids to begin hunting for the shapes at your signal. They should answer the question on their paper when they find the shape, and then put the shape back where they found it, then continue until they find all of the shapes and attempt to answer the questions.
- After everyone has answered all of the questions, go over the answers as a group. Then have each kid or pair of kids total the amount of points they got.
- Optional: Give an amount of candy based on number of points each kid/pair got.
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Greet kids with high fives as they take their seats. Ask them to share praises from their week.
- Say: “Well, that is a great way to start our day together, by sharing how God has worked in our lives. Sometimes we have major things happen that make us realize that God is working, and sometimes it is small, everyday happenings that cause us to praise Him. Today we are going to talk about a major event that three of the disciples witnessed, and many people think it occurred at this site!” (*Either have the object projected on the wall or print out a copy from the DVD-ROM.*)
- Distribute Family Cards and share that this is a picture of a church built to remember today’s Bible story.

THE BIBLE STORY

- Say: “Today’s story is told in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. We are going to form groups and each group will read from a different book.”
- Form 3 groups and assign each group one of the Connection Passages and a person(s): Jesus, Peter, James and John.
- Instruct: “Read your passage as a group and then come up with a way to retell it from the point of view of the person or persons you were given.”
- Allow the groups time to read and come up with their plan. Then let each group present the story. Use the Bible Story script provided to help fill in any gaps.
- Say: “It is so interesting to think about these events from the perspective of the different people in the story. Before we look more closely at this story, let’s learn today’s Text Truth: **Jesus is the Son of God and superior to Moses, Elijah, and all other prophets.** Moses and Elijah seem like very important people to us, but they are not more important than Jesus—no one ever has been and no one ever will be.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Encourage kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 17:1-13.
- Read verses 1-3 and ask: “Does anyone know what the word *transfigure* means? That is not a word we use very often.” Allow for answers.
- Say: “Transformation is another way to describe what happened. Jesus transformed before Peter’s, James’ and John’s eyes! What a special experience they had with Jesus.”
- Read verse 4.
- Ask: “Have you ever been doing something or been involved in something that you enjoyed so much, that you wished it would never, ever end?” Consider sharing an experience.
- Continue: “That is how Peter felt when He saw Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. He did not want to leave ... ever! Jesus had to explain to these disciples what was about to happen. He had told them before about His death,

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: Family Cards, “Church of the Transfiguration” (*DVD-ROM*)
- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (*Poster Pack*)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (*Poster Pack*)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 17:5” (*Poster Pack*)
- Prayer: “The Disciples” (*Poster Pack*)

burial and resurrection, but they did not fully understand them and still did not.”

- Review: “Last week we learned what the disciples and others thought about Jesus and who He is. This week we are learning about what God thought about Jesus.”
- Read verse 5.
- Ask: “Do those words sound familiar? They are the same words that God spoke about Jesus at His baptism. There should be no question now in the disciples’ minds of who Jesus is.”
- Read verses 6-13.
- Say: “The Old Testament prophet Malachi told of a man who would come before the Messiah, John the Baptist; though the religious leaders did not believe that John the Baptist was the forerunner of the Messiah. They also did not believe Jesus was the promised Messiah. They were looking for someone different—a warrior instead of a servant. Our Text Truth reminds us of who Jesus is. Let’s say it again together: **Jesus is the Son of God and superior to Moses, Elijah, and all other prophets.**”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and the “Connection Statement.” Read both statements aloud or invite volunteers to read them to the group.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 2” video.
- Ask: “What did Joel discover about heights and lights in his visit to Clingman’s Dome? What did the disciples learn about Jesus while they were on the mountain?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 17:5” poster.
- Say: “Let’s read our Memory Verse together.”
- Share: “This is such a special verse because it records God speaking directly to men about His Son, Jesus. Imagine what it must have been like to hear this! Pretend that you are Peter, James or John and you hear God speaking. Now let’s read the verse again together.”
- Repeat the verse, and when kids are ready, cover the Memory Verse poster and say it again.

PRAYER

- Display “The Disciples” poster. Read aloud about Peter, James, and John. If time allows, you may choose to highlight other disciples that were not in today’s Bible story.
- Say: “Although we probably won’t hear God speak like these disciples did, we have ways to communicate and hear from Him. One of the best ways is through prayer. Let’s pray now, thanking God for sending His Son.”
- Ask for a volunteer or another teacher to pray.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids find today's pages.
- Invite a volunteer to share about today's object, the Church of Transfiguration. Briefly review the Bible story and invite two more volunteers to read aloud the information about Moses and Elijah.
- Guide girls and boys to mark the scales to reflect their responses to each of the "How Scared Are You?" items.
- Help kids unscramble the words in "Memory Verse Scramble."
- Guide kids to pronounce the "Word to Know." Review how this word appeared in today's Bible study.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

PRAYER TIME

- Talk about ways that kids can be praying for each other this week and then form pairs or groups to pray for each other.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.



"SON" CATCHERS

Tools: CDs or DVDs, fishing line, permanent markers (variety of colors), large sheets of paper

- Clean and dry CDs/DVDs prior to class.
- Cover tables with paper.

- **Say:** "Today's Bible story talked about how Jesus' appearance changed at the transfiguration."
- **Ask:** "What are some of the words that were used to describe it?" (*Luke 9:29*)
- **Say:** "Today we are going to make 'Son' Catchers to remind us of what happened on the mountain."
- **Instruct** kids to take a CD/DVD and color both sides with permanent markers. (*You can suggest that they write the name Jesus on it to remind them further about today's Bible story.*) Encourage them to be creative in their designs. After both sides are colored, tie a piece of fishing line through the hole in the middle of the CD/DVD and knot at the top.
- **Say:** "Take your 'Son' Catcher home and hang it in a place that you will see daily so that it reminds you of today's Text Truth: **Jesus is the Son of God and superior to Moses, Elijah, and all other prophets.**"

HIS GLORY COMES DOWN



Tools: "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), white balloon

- Assemble kids into a circle and stand in the middle. Explain that the white balloon represents God's glory that the disciples witnessed when they saw Jesus transfigured.
- Say: "Even though we have not seen God's glory like these disciples did, we can see evidence of His glory everyday. We can see it in the nature that He created, we can see it when someone we know trusts Jesus, and we can see it when something wonderful happens and the credit can only go to God. It can also be an event that we read about in the Bible."
- Hold the balloon up and share a time when you saw God's glory.
- Say: "When I toss the balloon in the air, the first person to catch it will then say 'I saw God's glory when...'" and share a time or a Bible story. Then that person will toss it in the air for another person to catch."
- Continue playing until everyone has had a turn.
- Say: "There are many important people that we read about in the Bible, but none of them are more important than Jesus. Let's say today's Text Truth again: **Jesus is the Son of God and superior to Moses, Elijah, and all other prophets.**"

CAN I GET A WITNESS?



Tools: paper, pens, pretend microphones, Bible times clothing (optional)

- Form groups of 4. Instruct each group to choose the parts of reporter, Peter, James, and John. Then have them plan their "report" by writing out their answers to eyewitness type questions.
- Example Questions: *What happened on that mountain? Who did you see? Were you really sleeping? What did you see? Were you scared? What did you hear? What are you going to do now?*
- Allow time for them to come up with their news report and then reassemble into large group. Have each group share their report "live."
- Say: "Those were terrific reports about the transfiguration. It made me realize just how amazing this event was and how awesome Jesus is! Let's say our Text Truth again: **Jesus is the Son of God and superior to Moses, Elijah, and all other prophets.**"



Session 3



THE RICH YOUNG MAN

Matthew 19:16-26

Matthew told about someone who went to Jesus in search of assurance about eternal life. The man had given himself to making sure that he lived according to religious rules, but he wondered if something was still missing. He wanted to know what he needed to do in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. That's why he turned to Jesus for help. Like people today, the man thought that eternal life was something that had to be earned. Jesus helped him see that He alone offers eternal life to people who are willing to follow Him.

When asked about what a person must do to gain eternal life, Jesus first pointed to keeping God's commandments. The inquiring young man claimed to have kept the laws identified by Jesus, yet he still lacked assurance, confusing outward performance with obedient trust in God.

Human reasoning usually arrives at a wrong conclusion because it starts with the wrong question. The young man who approached Jesus appeared to have honorable motives, but he misunderstood the basic issues about himself, Jesus, and eternal life.

Despite his imperfect spiritual understanding, the young man should be credited at least with desiring a good goal. The biblical text shows he had material success but recognized he had a need. He lacked assurance of eternal life. This man apparently was not trying to trick Jesus, like so many other questioners. He truly wanted to know the way to everlasting life. He was not, however, willing to accept Jesus' answer.

The ultimate issue regarding eternal life is not merely obeying the commandments or altruistically helping the poor. Each person must decide what to do with Jesus. Jesus knew the only way this young man could devote himself completely to being a disciple was to let go of his former life, including its wealth, ease, and self-dependence. Christ never leaves room for negotiation or argument. Only one option is possible—total surrender.

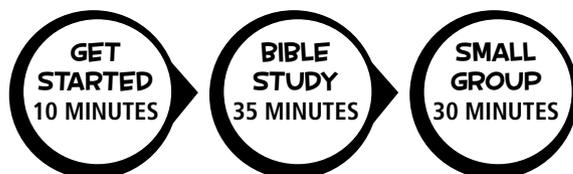
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 19:16-26

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 19:16-26; Mark 10:17-30; Luke 18:18-30

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 19:26

TEXT TRUTH: We cannot earn salvation. It is a gift we receive when we trust in Jesus.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Bible Verse Pop Up: “Matthew 16:24” and “Matthew 17:5” (Poster Pack), whiteboard, dry erase marker, paper, pen or marker, cardboard, glue

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: a gift you have been given, Family Cards, “Gift” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack), highlighter, copies of the Bible story, whiteboard, dry erase marker

- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)

- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos

- Memory Verse: “Matthew 19:26” (Poster Pack), “Barbells” (enhanced CD), pen, ziplock bags

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

- Music: musical instruments (optional), music, whiteboard, dry erase marker

- Make: craft from Get Started, permanent markers (various colors), aluminum foil, twine or string, stapler, cotton swab (optional)

- Move: large box, wrapping paper, music, index cards, permanent marker, tape

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

THE RICH YOUNG RULER

CONNECTION PASSAGES:

Matthew 19:16-26; Mark 10:17-30; Luke 18:18-30

One day when Jesus was teaching in the region of Judea, a man came up to Him. The man asked Jesus, “Teacher, what good things should I do to have eternal life?” Jesus responded, “Why are you asking Me what is good? Only God is good. If you want eternal life, keep the commandments.”

The man asked, “Which commandments should I keep?” Jesus quoted part of the Ten Commandments.

“Do not murder.

Do not commit adultery.

Do not steal.

Do not lie.

Do not defraud.

Honor your father and mother.”

The man replied, “I have kept all of these commandments from the time I was a young man. What should I do now?” Jesus answered, “Go and sell what you own. Give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. Then, come and follow Me.”

The young man was shocked. He left sad because he had many possessions.

Jesus looked at His disciples and explained, “It will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven.” The disciples were confused, “Who can be saved?” Jesus responded, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

The rich young ruler rejected Jesus and salvation.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 19:16-26

- We cannot do anything to earn our salvation.
- The rich young ruler loved his money and possessions more than he loved Jesus.
- God offers us the free gift of eternal life.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Verse Pop Up: “Matthew 16:24” and “Matthew 17:5” (*Poster Pack*), whiteboard, dry erase marker, paper, pen or marker, cardboard, glue

BIBLE VERSE POP UP

- Use this time to review the memory verses from the last two weeks. Read both Bible verses as a group from the posters on your wall. Then cover up the posters or remove during the game. Assign each child a number and give them a piece of paper with that number written on it. Then write those numbers, not in sequence, in a line on the whiteboard. For example, if you number the kids 1-6, then write 5, 2, 4, 6, 1, 3 on the board.
- Have kids sit in a line and instruct them that at your signal, whoever has the first number listed on the whiteboard should pop up and say the first word of Matthew 16:24. Then the kid with the next number written on the board pops up quickly and says the next word. Continue until the verse has been completed. Try writing the numbers in a different sequence and repeating. Then play again with Matthew 17:5.
- Begin a craft that will be completed at the end of class. Give each kid a piece of cardboard and a pen or marker. Ask them to write the words *Free Gift* on the cardboard and then trace it with the glue. They can also create designs around the words. Allow the glue to harden while you teach the Bible story.
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Bring a gift to class. Hold up the item that you brought and ask for someone to guess why it is special to you.
- Explain why it is special. Invite kids to share if they have a gift that is special to them or their family.
- Distribute Family Cards. Display the “Gift” visual.
- Say: “Today’s object is a gift. We are going to learn about the best gift God has ever given us.”
- Transition: “Let’s get back into the Book of Matthew and learn more from the life of Jesus.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Prior to class, print copies of the Bible story script and highlight the different parts, including a narrator.
- Invite kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 19:16-26.
- Say: “This passage records a conversation between Jesus and the man known as the rich young ruler, and also a conversation between Jesus and His disciples. We are going to role play the parts, this way we can actually see the conversation taking place.”
- Ask for volunteers for the roles of: Rich Young Ruler, Jesus, and Disciples. Give them each a copy of the Bible Story. Remind kids to listen closely to Jesus’ words as the story is read.
- Ask: “What does it say in verse 25 that the disciples were feeling at the end of their conversation with Jesus?” (*Confused*) “Why do you think they were confused?” Allow for answers.
- Say: “They were confused because Jesus seemed to be making salvation very difficult. The truth is, Jesus was simply revealing the man’s selfish ideas about eternal life. The rich young ruler wanted to have eternal life and live forever in heaven, but He did not truly want to follow Jesus. He wanted (*write on whiteboard*) *things + Jesus* and Jesus told him that to have eternal life he must pursue *Jesus + nothing*. Our Text Truth today tells us exactly that: **We cannot earn salvation. It is a gift we receive when we trust in Jesus.**”
- Ask: “What did the rich young ruler say in verse 22 when Jesus finished with ‘Come and follow Me’?” (*Nothing*)
- Say: “He did not respond at all; he did not even ask Jesus a question. He rejected the free gift of Jesus.”
- Continue: “Let’s read a bit more of this story and find out what else Jesus told the disciples.”

THE BIBLE STORY

- Have kids get in pairs and assign half of the pairs Mark 10:28-30 and the other half Luke 18:28-30.
- Instruct: “There is just a bit more to this story and it is also recorded in

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: a gift you have received, Family Cards, “Gift” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack), highlighter, copies of the Bible story, whiteboard, dry erase marker
- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 19:26” (Poster Pack), “Barbells” (enhanced CD), pen, ziplock bags

PREPARATION:

- Print out enough “Barbell” outlines to write one word from today’s Memory Verse on each, mix up the words and place in a ziplock bag. (*Make several sets.*)

the Books of Mark and Luke. I want you to read the passage in the book I assigned you and then discuss with your partner what you read.”

- Let kids summarize the rest of the story.
- Ask: “What was the very first question the rich young ruler asked?” (*“Teacher, what good things should I do to have eternal life?”*)
- Explain: “His question was wrong because ‘there is no one who is good, not one.’ There was no good ‘thing’ that this rich young ruler could do and there is no good ‘thing’ that you and I can do. Only Jesus can do the work of salvation. Let’s say our Text Truth again: **We cannot earn salvation. It is a gift we receive when we trust in Jesus.**”
- Display and review the “Text Truth Strip” and the “Connection Statement.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 3” video.
- Discuss: “Where did Joel visit in today’s episode of Explore the Bible on Location? What did the rich young man ask Jesus? What did the disciples learn about salvation?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 19:26” poster and read the Memory Verse together.
- Say: “When I think about something being impossible, I think of a heavy weight that I cannot lift. In these bags are weights with the words from our Memory Verse written on them. After you form groups, you will be given a set, and when your group thinks their barbells are in order, shout ‘With God all things are possible!’”
- Give kids the start command. Help boys and girls as needed.

PRAYER

- Say: “While I pray, you pray too asking God to do the impossible in your life.”
- Close in prayer.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Guide boys and girls to open their Explorer Guides to today's pages.
- Invite volunteers to read the information in "Wealthy Then vs. Wealthy Now." Remind kids that having wealth is not bad. Loving anything more than Jesus is wrong.
- Guide kids to read about the "Gifts in the Bible." Review today's object and the Text Truth before helping girls and boys record their thoughts in "What Would You Say?"
- Invite girls and boys to solve "The Common Word" activity.
- Ask kids to silently read today's "Word to Know" and think about it.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

PRAYER TIME

- Use "The Gospel" poster to share the good news with your group. Encourage them to talk with you after the group prays together if they have not received God's free gift of salvation. Lead in a prayer asking God to work in their lives.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

SING! SING! SING!

Tools: musical instruments (optional), music, whiteboard, dry erase marker

- Have kids list songs that talk about how great, strong, mighty, and amazing God is. Write their song suggestions on the board and then sing the songs as a group using actions when applicable.
- Say: "These songs make me even more excited about today's Bible story and Memory Verse! I know that our God can do anything and there is no problem that I have that is too big or too hard for Him. Let's say our Memory Verse together again."
- Review today's Text Truth: **We cannot earn salvation. It is a gift we receive when we trust in Jesus.**
- Option: Distribute small instruments to shake or play during songs.





FREE GIFT

Tools: craft from Get Started, permanent markers (various colors), aluminum foil, twine or string, stapler, cotton swabs (optional)

- Say: “Today we are going to make something to remind us of our Text Truth. Let’s say it together again: **We cannot earn salvation. It is a gift we receive when we trust in Jesus.**”
- Continue: “We started this craft earlier and now comes the fun part.”
- Give kids their cardboard pieces back and staple a piece of twine or string at the top to make a hanger. Instruct them to cover the cardboard with foil. They can use their fingertips or you can provide cotton swabs to help press it out and around the raised glue portions. Then let them color the picture around the raised glue areas with permanent markers.
- Conclude: “You can hang these pictures at home to remind you of today’s Bible story, or you can give it to someone that you want to share about God’s free gift of salvation with.”



GIFT WRAPPED REVIEW

Tools: large box, wrapping paper, music, index cards, permanent marker, tape

- Prior to class write the Memory Verse on index cards, one word on each card. Place cards, mixed up, inside a large box and cover in wrapping paper.
- Assemble kids in a circle and instruct them to begin passing the gift when the music starts and to stop when the music stops. The person holding the gift when the music stops should begin unwrapping until the music starts again. Continue passing until the music stops and then unwrapping until music starts again. Play until the gift is unwrapped and opened. The person that gets the box open gets the first chance to put the memory verse cards in order by taping them to the whiteboard. If he needs help, allow the rest of the group to assist him.
- Say: “Let’s say today’s Text Truth again: **We cannot earn salvation. It is a gift we receive when we trust Jesus.**”



Session

4



THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Matthew 21:1-11

In July 2015, the US Women's Soccer Team, winners of the Women's World Cup, received a ticker-tape parade through the center of New York City. Thousands of people applauded and hundreds threw shredded paper from office windows onto the passing champions. Yet, on other occasions, those same athletes visited the Big Apple individually without being recognized by the people they passed on the street.

Similarly, Jesus had visited Jerusalem many times without fanfare before His famed triumphal entry. (*See John 5:1-9; 7:1-10 for examples.*) This time was different. Although Jesus did not make a public announcement of His arrival, large crowds gathered to greet Him. The masses swelled as word spread that the prophet from Galilee was approaching.

Even in their praise, the people failed to understand Jesus' nature or His purpose. They thought He was a great prophet, but did not recognize Him as the Son of God. They were enamored with His miracles, grateful for His healing, and amazed by His teaching, but none of them were prepared for what would happen over the coming week. Their cheers would degenerate into jeers as He not only upended the money changers' tables in the temple, but turned their world upside down through the cross.

When the children presented perfect praise as they delighted in Jesus' presence, the Jewish leaders responded with indignation. They had been challenged not only by Jesus' rebuke over their prostituting the temple grounds for profit, but by His popularity with the people. For months these religious charlatans chaffed at Jesus' authenticity and conspired to remove Him one way or another. Jesus' open rebuke of them and their authority was the last straw, yet they could neither refute His miraculous power nor withstand a popularity fanned by His healing of the sick. As Jesus departed to spend the night in Bethany, probably with his friend Lazarus, the Jewish leaders began their final conspiracy against Him.

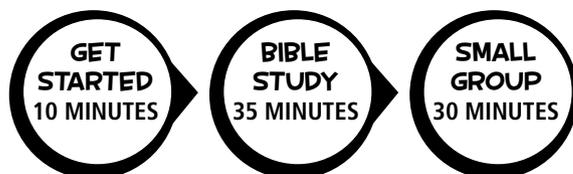
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 21:1-11

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11,15-18; Luke 19:28-40;
John 12:12-19

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 21:9

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Palm Leaf Memory Game: “Palm Leaf Outline” (enhanced CD), marker, basket, “Matthew 21:9” (Poster Pack)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: real palm leaf (optional) or green poster board, “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD, if using palm leaf), Family Cards, “Palm Branch” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles

- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)

- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos

- Memory Verse: “Matthew 21:9” (Poster Pack), palm leaves from Get Started

- Prayer: “Timeline” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

- Move: “Palm Leaf Outline” (enhanced CD), marker, whiteboard, dry erase marker, tape, small prize (optional), “Review Questions” (enhanced CD)

- Make: heavyweight paper, green finger paint, pencils, paint shirts, tablecloths, “Palm Branch” (DVD-ROM)

- Examine: “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), green apples or pears, knife, blueberries, pretzel rods, paper plates

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

JESUS ENTERED JERUSALEM

CONNECTION PASSAGES:

Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11,15-18; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-19

Jesus and His disciples walked toward Jerusalem. As they neared, Jesus sent two of the disciples into a village. “Go to the village. You will see a donkey and a colt. Untie them and bring them to Me.”

Jesus fulfilled a prophecy Zechariah made: “Tell Jerusalem that their King will come riding on a donkey. He will come with gentleness and humility.”

The disciples obeyed Jesus and brought the donkey and the colt. They laid their robes on the animal and Jesus sat on the animal.

A large crowd gathered. People had seen Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead and were telling about it. The people spread their robes on the road and some cut palm branches and placed them on the road. The people shouted, “Hosanna! The King who comes in the name of the Lord is blessed!”

The city of Jerusalem was shaken by this event. The Pharisees told Jesus to stop the people from praising Him. Jesus replied, “If the people didn’t praise Me, the rocks would praise Me!”

Once Jesus entered Jerusalem, He went to the temple. Inside the temple complex, people were buying and selling things. Jesus turned over the tables. He said, “Scripture says that My house will be a house of prayer.” Jesus told the people they were turning the temple into a den of thieves.

The blind and the lame people came to Jesus. Jesus healed them. The children were shouting, “Hosanna.” The chief priests and the scribes were upset. Jesus left Jerusalem and spent the night at Bethany.

As Jesus taught in the temple complex in the days after He entered Jerusalem, the religious leaders continued to grow more and more upset with Him. They began to look for a way to get rid of Jesus.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

The people praised and honored Jesus as their new King.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 21:1-11

- We should praise Jesus.
- The people praised Jesus as their King.
- We can praise Jesus as our King, Savior, friend, Lord, and so on.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Palm Leaf Memory Game: “Palm Leaf Outline” (*enhanced CD*), marker, basket, “Matthew 21:9” (*Poster Pack*)

PREPARATION:

- Print the “Palm Leaf Outline” (*enhanced CD*) and make enough copies to have one leaf for every word in today’s Memory Verse. Write one word of today’s Memory Verse on each palm leaf with a marker. Line up the leaves in order on a table.

PALM LEAF MEMORY GAME

- As kids are coming into class, read today’s Memory Verse several times. Feel free to do this in various ways to help commit it to memory.
- After you feel like the kids are familiar with the verse, line them up and instruct them to take turns running to get a leaf and then saying the verse with that leaf removed. Then they can place the leaf in a basket and run back. Continue playing until the last leaf is taken and the verse said. If a kid has trouble remembering the verse, allow another kid to help her.
- If time permits, allow kids to relay again, but this time remove palm leaves from the basket one at a time and put the words of the verse in order. You can repeat either game or have leaves made up with previous verses if time permits.
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- If possible, have a real palm leaf to use when introducing today's object. If a real one is not available, cut out one from green poster board.
- As kids walk to their seats, greet them by waving the palm branch and saying "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"
- Say: "Well, I am sure by now that everyone knows what today's object is!"
- Distribute Family Cards. Display the "Palm Branch" visual.
- Say: "There are many symbols that when you see them, you immediately think of the United States. One example of this is our flag. Who knows another one of the national symbols for the United States?" (examples: *The Liberty Bell, flag, bald eagle, national anthem, Uncle Sam, and the Statue of Liberty*)
- Continue: "One of the symbols associated with Jewish people is the palm branch. The city of Jericho was actually known as the city of Palms."
- Ask: "What do you think it meant when the people laid their branches down in front of Jesus when He entered Jerusalem?" Allow for answers.
- Transition: "Let's read more of this story and find out the significance of the palm branches and the triumphal entry."

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Ask kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 21:1-11 and one volunteer to look up Zechariah 9:9.
- Have a volunteer read Matthew 21:1-5
- Ask: "Who can tell me what a prophecy is?" (*Word from God to a group of people.*)
- Say: "Today's story is a fulfillment of an Old Testament prophecy. Let's read it." Have a volunteer read Zechariah 9:9.
- Share: "The Book of Zechariah was written over 500 years before Jesus was born! And what was promised over 500 years earlier is being fulfilled in Jerusalem on this day! This is just one of the reasons that today's Text Truth is true. Let's say it together: **Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.** There are over 300 Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus. That should cause us to praise and honor Him with our lives. Let's get into our story and find out what happened on this very special day."

THE BIBLE STORY

- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Ask: "Have you ever been present when a very important person entered a building or was in a parade? It is exciting, isn't it?"
- Continue: "Many times there are flags, confetti, or noisemakers to announce the person's arrival, or maybe a person with a microphone shouting the arrival of the individual." Give an example by announcing

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: real palm leaf (*optional*) or green poster board, "Allergy Alert" (*enhanced CD, if using palm leaf*), Family Cards, "Palm Branch" (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles
- The Bible Story: Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements" (*Poster Pack*)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: "Matthew 21:9" (*Poster Pack*), palm leaves from Get Started
- Prayer: "Timeline" (*Poster Pack*)

the arrival of someone in the class and instruct the class to shout and clap. “Now imagine that you do not like or approve of the person that was being praised. The excitement might make you nervous or angry! This is how the religious leaders felt at all the enthusiasm surrounding Jesus. The more people loved Jesus and looked to Him, the more upset the leaders became and they began to look for a way to get rid of Jesus.”

- Ask them to read Matthew 21:12-17 and identify why some people did not like what Jesus was doing.
- Say: “We will learn more about what the religious leaders had in mind for Jesus in the coming weeks. Let’s review our Text Truth now: **Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.** The people praised Jesus as their King. We can praise Jesus as our King too, and our Savior and friend.”
- Display and review the “Text Truth Strip” and “Connection Statement.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 4” video.
- Discuss: “What did you think of Joel’s amazing entrance? Describe the entrance Jesus made into Jerusalem. Share a reason you praise Jesus.”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 21:9” poster.
- Review the Memory Verse. If time permits, use the palm leaves from the Get Started activity to help with memorization. Allow kids to play the game again, put them in order, or scatter the leaves around the room and have them gather and put the leaves in order.

PRAYER

- Display the “Timeline.” Indicate the events that have happened up to today’s study.
- Say: “We have a lot to praise God for. When I say *go*, begin calling out praises to Him one at a time.”
- Ask another teacher to close praise time in prayer.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids locate today's pages.
- Review the object and select readers to share the "Palm Tree Facts."
- Guide boys and girls to complete the "Bible Story Review." Encourage kids to use their Bibles to help locate any answers they cannot remember.
- Select a volunteer to read about the prophet Zechariah.
- Guide kids to practice today's "Word to Know."
- Ask kids to quietly think and complete the activity "Reasons I Praise Jesus."

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

PRAYER TIME

- Pair kids up and have them share a praise and prayer request with each other. Then have them pray for each other.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

PLAY OR PASS

Tools: "Palm Leaf Outline" (enhanced CD), marker, whiteboard, dry erase marker, tape, small prize (optional), "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)

- Print 20 "Palm Leaf Outlines" and write a review question on each leaf with a marker, assigning a point value to each. You may use questions from previous sessions too. Leave 8 leaves blank. Draw a tree on the whiteboard and tape the palm leaves (writing side down) to the tree branches, mix the blank leaves in with review question leaves.
- Form two teams.
- Say: "On my signal, teams will take turns running to the board, grabbing a leaf and either playing by answering the review question written on it or passing if you do not know the answer. If you pass, then the other team has 15 seconds to discuss and offer an answer. If you get it correct, then your team gets the points written on that leaf. If you pass and the other team answers correctly, then they get the points. No one gets points if it is answered incorrectly. If you get a blank leaf, then you can get 1 point for praising God by saying 'Hosanna! God is great because ... ' and giving a reason you think God is great."
- The team with the most points at the end wins. Consider giving a small prize to that team (optional).
- Say: "Let's end by saying today's Text Truth: **Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.**"



PALM LEAF FINGER PAINTING



Tools: heavyweight paper, green finger paint, pencils, paint shirts, tablecloths, "Palm Branch" (DVD-ROM)

- Display the "Palm Branch" visual where all the boys and girls can see it.
- Give each kid a piece of heavyweight paper and a pencil. Invite kids to lightly sketch with their pencils the shape of a palm branch.
- Distribute paint and paint shirts. Explain that kids can fingerpaint over their pencil sketch to create their own palm leaf art. Encourage kids to do some of their painting using their fingerprints to give their art more texture.
- Challenge kids to print with the fingerpaint today's Text Truth on their paper.
- Say: "This art can remind you of today's Text Truth: **Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.** Let's say it together!"

PALM TREE RECIPE



Tools: "Allergy Alert" (Poster Pack), green apples or pears, knife, blueberries, pretzel rods, paper plates

- Wash and cut green apples or pears into small slices (at least 4 per kid). Wash blueberries and allow 3 per child.
- Give each child a paper plate, the apple or pear slices, blueberries, and a pretzel rod. Guide them in assembling the palm tree with the pretzel rod as the tree trunk, the apple or pear slices as the palm leaves and the blueberries among the palm leaves as coconuts.
- As they are making their palm trees, review today's Memory Verse and Text Truth, **Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.** Ask kids to think of a way to praise and honor God for every palm branch they have on their trees.
- Pray, thanking God for this food and enjoy eating the snack together.



Session 5



PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD OWNER

Matthew 21:33-45

For some time, Jesus had been challenging conventional thought. Throughout His ministry, Jesus touched hearts and challenged listeners to believe that He was the Messiah. People all over the region followed Jesus. The hearts of Jewish religious leaders were still cold toward Him. In a confrontation with some of these leaders, Jesus shared the parable of the landowner. The message of the parable could not have been any clearer. Anyone who refused to turn his heart toward Christ faced destruction.

Conflict rarely occurred in isolated engagements. Usually a pattern of ongoing struggle characterizes hostile interactions. Jesus' actions and teaching continually challenged the spiritual hypocrisy of the religious leaders. Time after time, the Pharisee's used debates and accusations in attempts at discrediting Jesus. Finally, they determined to destroy Him.

Jesus' parable was a portrait of Israel's history. God was long-suffering toward His people. He loved Israel, even though the people continually rejected Him. They replaced righteousness with ritual and chose sin over service. Their worship practices had fallen into superficial formalism that lacked love for the Lord. God had often sent prophets to rebuke the nation and call them to repentance, but the Israelites refused to respond.

God is long-suffering by nature (*Ex. 34:6*). He did not stop loving His people even when they rejected Him. Like the landowner, the Lord sent additional servants to call Israel to repentance. God's tolerance has often been ill-rewarded as people scorned the message and mistreated the messengers.

In the fullness of time, God sent His Son (*Gal. 4:4*). Instead of repenting in submission to the Father, though, obstinate offenders plotted ways to continue in their rebellion. In the case of the Pharisees, they could not act immediately because they feared the masses of people who believed in Jesus. Yet, they pursued a course that ultimately ended at the cross.

SESSION FOCUS

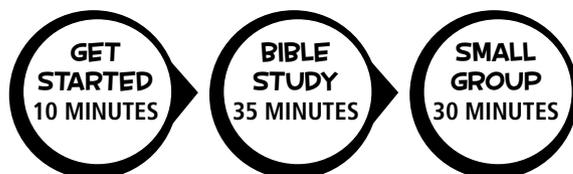
CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 21:33-45

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 21:42

ADDITIONAL MEMORY VERSE: 1 John 5:12

TEXT TRUTH: Some people will reject God's Son, Jesus.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Spin a Turn: *board game spinner*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: *“Allergy Alert” (Poster Pack), grapes, Family Cards, “Watchtower” (DVD-ROM)*
- The Bible Story: *Bibles*
- Examine the Text: *Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack), whiteboard, dry erase marker*

- Play the Video: *Explore the Bible on Location videos*

- Memory Verse: *“1 John 5:12” (Poster Pack), large bed sheet*
- Prayer: *paper, pen or pencils*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move: *large cardboard bricks, index cards, marker, tape, “Review Questions” (enhanced CD)*

- Make: *“1 John 5:12 Template” (enhanced CD), brown paper bags, small bottles of water, small bags of cheese crackers, hole punch, yarn, heavyweight paper (various colors), markers (various colors), glue sticks*

- Examine: *none*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD OWNER

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12

Jesus loved to teach people about God and the kingdom of God. Sometimes He would use a parable to help people understand something He wanted them to learn.

One day, Jesus was talking to a group of religious leaders. Jesus said, “Listen to this parable. A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, a grape press in it, and built a watchtower for it. He rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away. When it came time to harvest the grapes, the man sent some servants to collect his part of the fruit. The farmers beat one servant up, killed the second one, and threw stones at the third servant.

Again, the man sent a group of servants and the farmers did the same thing again. Finally, the man decided to send his beloved son. He thought, ‘They will respect my son.’

When the farmers saw the son coming, they decided to kill the son and take his inheritance, the vineyard. So they grabbed the son, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.”

Jesus asked, “What will the owner of the vineyard do to the farmers?”

The religious leaders said, “The man will destroy those terrible men and rent his vineyard to other farmers who will give him his fruit.”

Jesus asked, “Have you read in the Scriptures: The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone?”

Jesus told the religious leaders, “The kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation that is producing fruit.”

The religious leaders heard the parables and knew Jesus was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest Jesus, but they were afraid of the people.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

The religious leaders had failed to love God. God would choose new people to lead His followers.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE:

Matthew 21:33-45

- Some people will refuse to love Jesus.
- The religious leaders did not like Jesus.
- God wants followers who love and obey Him.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Spin a Turn: board game spinner

OPTION:

- Substitute numbered cubes if you do not have a spinner.

SPIN A TURN

- Guide kids to take turns spinning a board game spinner and answering the question that corresponds with the number on the spinner.
- Questions:
 1. What is your favorite Bible song?
 2. What is your favorite Bible story?
 3. Who is your favorite male Bible person and why?
 4. What would you ask Jesus if you had the chance?
 5. Who is your favorite female Bible person and why?
- If your spinner has more numbers, use these questions:
 6. What is a praise from last week?
 7. What is your favorite way to worship Jesus? (singing, praying, reading your Bible ...)
 8. If you could have supper with one Bible person, who would it be?
 9. What is your favorite Bible verse?
 10. If you could be a person in a Bible story, who would it be and why?
- Say: “Today’s Bible story is one of Jesus’ parables.”
- Ask: “What are parables and why did Jesus use them?” (*Stories used to help people understand God and His kingdom.*) “Many times these parables revealed the evil ways of the religious leaders at that time. This is the case in today’s Bible study and will be a warning to us about how we respond to Jesus.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Greet kids enthusiastically as they are seated and give each kid a grape or two.
- Hold up the remaining grapes and ask if anyone has an idea about the location of today's Bible story. (*vineyard*)
- Say: "Yes, today's story took place in a vineyard, which was a place where grapes were grown and harvested."
- Distribute Family Cards. Display the "Watchtower" visual.
- Continue: "Today's object is a watchtower in Israel. These buildings were places where the vineyard owners and managers could oversee the vineyard. This allowed them to see the big picture of what was going on, unlike the tenants who only saw their little part of the vineyard."
- Share: "God is like the vineyard owner in the watchtower. He can see the big picture and knows what is happening and what is about to happen while we are like the tenants who can only see our little portion of the vineyard. Let's dive in and find out what Jesus was trying to teach the religious leaders with this parable."

THE BIBLE STORY

- Introduce: "Last week our story ended with the religious leaders becoming angry at all the excitement surrounding Jesus. They did not want people to follow Him or believe Him, so they began to challenge His authority when He was teaching. Many times Jesus used stories, called parables, to teach truths and answer questions. Our story today is a parable Jesus told that revealed His authority and how people respond to Him in different ways."
- Ask kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 21:33-46.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Say: "It is important when we come to a parable in Scripture that we identify who the people in the story represent. Let's do that with today's parable."
- List the following people on the whiteboard and allow kids to guess who they believe the people represent:
 - ▶ Vineyard Owner: God
 - ▶ Vineyard: God's people
 - ▶ Farmers: Religious leaders
 - ▶ Servants: Prophets
 - ▶ Vineyard Owner's Son: Jesus
- Say: "It is also necessary to identify how the story relates to the events the people were currently experiencing. Let's read it again and see if we can figure it out."

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: "Allergy Alert" (*Poster Pack*), grapes, Family Cards, "Watchtower" (*DVD-ROM*)
- The Bible Story: Bibles
- Examine the Text: Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements" (*Poster Pack*), whiteboard, dry erase marker
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: "1 John 5:12" (*Poster Pack*), large bed sheet
- Prayer: paper, pen or pencils

- Ask for volunteers to read Matthew 21:33-39 and 40-46.
- Explain: “Jesus was saying that God sent prophets to tell Israel about the coming Messiah, but the religious leaders had always opposed these prophets and killed them. Then God sent His Son, Jesus, and He was being rejected and would be killed too.”
- Say: “Jesus then asked what the vineyard owner would do to the farmers. How did the religious leaders answer?” (*They would be killed and the vineyard given to farmers that would give him his fruit.*)
- Say: “Jesus referred to a Psalm to describe what would happen to Him.”
- Have a volunteer read Matthew 21:42 or Psalm 118:22.
- Conclude: “The religious leaders knew that Jesus was talking about them. He was the stone and they had rejected Him. Today’s Text Truth speaks to how the religious leaders responded to Jesus: **Some people will reject God’s Son, Jesus.** What will you do with Jesus? Will He be the stone that is rejected or the chief cornerstone that provides salvation?”
- Let kids know that you and the other teachers are available to talk and pray with them if they have questions about their relationship with Jesus.
- Display and review the “Text Truth Strip” and “Connection Statement.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 5” video.
- Ask: “What was Kaileigh guarding? Why did she need a tower? What kind of tower was in our Bible story? Who rejected Jesus in today’s Bible study?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “1 John 5:12” poster.
- Say: “Let’s read our Memory Verse together.”
- Have kids grip a portion of a large bed sheet, spacing out until there are kids all around the sheet. Begin saying the verse while the kids raise their arms up and down. Try doing this faster, then slower, and if possible louder and softer coordinating motion/volume with the speed. Repeat as time permits.

PRAYER

- Ask kids to write down the initials or code name of someone they know that does not know Jesus. If they do not have a relationship with Jesus, encourage them to write their own initials or code name down. Have them give the slips of paper to you and then pray aloud for all of the names (*but do not name any specifically*).
- Say: “I will be praying specifically for each name or initials on these slips of paper. If you wrote your own name, please talk to me or another teacher or your parents about how you can know Jesus today. We would love to share with you!”

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help girls and boys locate today's pages.
- Help boys and girls review today's Bible story as you read about the object. Ask volunteers to read aloud "Grapes 101."
- Review what Jesus said about a cornerstone in Matthew 21:42. Ask a kid to read "What is a Cornerstone?"
- Review the Text Truth and guide kids to respond to the prompts in "How Can You Follow Jesus?"
- Guide kids to use their Bibles to solve the "Fruit Scramble" to discover some fruits the Holy Spirit gives followers of Jesus.
- Help kids review today's "Word to Know."

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

PRAYER TIME

- Lead prayer time by praying for those that are still rejecting Jesus.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

WATCHTOWER REVIEW



Tools: large cardboard bricks, index cards, marker, tape, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)

- Write "Review Questions" from today's Bible story and previous Bible stories on index cards and tape cards to large cardboard bricks. (If cardboard bricks are not available, use wooden or plastic interlocking blocks with a number written on them corresponding to a review question.)
- Use a few bricks without questions on them to make a base for the watchtower for kids to build on. Place remaining bricks in a pile and have kids line up on the other side of the room.
- Direct kids to take turns running and grabbing a brick. If they answer the question correctly, they can add the brick to the watchtower. See how high of a structure kids can make before it topples over. If there are bricks remaining, assemble the ones that fell over and continue the game.
- Say: "We were reminded in today's Bible story about the vineyard owner's son, Jesus, and that some people reject Him. Let's say our Text Truth again: **Some people will reject God's Son, Jesus.** Let's gather around the watchtower, hold hands, and pray for people to receive Jesus instead of rejecting Him."

“JESUS IS” LIFE WITNESSING BAGS



Tools: “1 John 5:12 Template” (enhanced CD) brown paper bags, small bottles of water, small bags of cheese crackers, hole punch, yarn, heavyweight paper (various colors), markers (various colors), glue sticks

- Prior to class print enough of the “1 John 5:12 Template” for every kid and cut them apart.
 - Cut heavyweight paper in half.
 - Check for allergies. If a kid is allergic to cheese crackers, provide another food item for the bags.
- Say: “Let’s say our Memory Verse again.”
 - Continue: “Today we are going to make witnessing bags to remind people that Jesus is the only way to have eternal life.”
 - Ask: “What are two things that we have to have to live?” (*food and water*)
 - Say: “We are going to put food and water in our bags and then attach these cards with 1 John 5:12 on them to a piece of heavyweight paper and then tie them to the top of the bag. Then you can write a note below the Memory Verse and sign your first name.”
 - Instruct kids to put the items into the bags, then fold the top of the bags over. While kids are gluing the templates onto the heavyweight paper and writing notes, punch a hole in each of the bags. Then punch a hole in the corner of each card and tie it to the bag with yarn.
 - Conclude: “Give this bag to someone that you want to share the good news of Jesus with this week. Then pray that they will come to know Jesus.”

RECOGNIZE OR REJECT?



Tools: none

- Say: “I am going to describe someone in our class and if you recognize who I am describing, without looking around, raise your hand and keep it up until I call on you.” (*Use features such as what they are wearing, color and length of hair, color of their eyes, and so forth.*)
- If the first person to raise their hand answers correctly, then play again. If they answer incorrectly, let kids keep guessing until they get it right.
- Share: “The Bible contains prophecies that described Jesus many hundreds of years before He came to earth as a baby. They told where He would come from, how He would be, and where He would live. Still, the religious leaders that Jesus was talking to in today’s story did not recognize Him. Just like some of you did not recognize the description of someone sitting next to you, people did not and still do not recognize Jesus as the Son of God.”
- Say: “For that reason, today’s Text Truth applies: **Some people will reject God’s Son, Jesus.** Let’s pray together that people’s eyes will be opened to Jesus!”



Session

6



PARABLE OF THE WEDDING BANQUET

Matthew 22:1-14

An invitation to a wedding can be a unique privilege. For that reason, it shouldn't be taken lightly. The bride and groom, along with their families and other members of the wedding party, usually make great efforts to ensure that everything is just right. All of the preparation for the wedding comes to mind when the invitation arrives. No wonder the invitation compels the invited guests to give serious consideration to what they should wear to the wedding. They want to dress appropriately for such a momentous occasion.

Jesus shared a parable about a wedding banquet with some Jewish leaders who had confronted Him at the temple. Jesus responded by directing their attention to a refusal to acknowledge Him as Messiah. In response, Jesus shared a parable about a king who hosted a wedding banquet and invited folks to come when everything was ready. The parable provided Jesus with an opportunity to teach a valuable lesson about being a citizen of God's kingdom. It affirmed that God invites everyone to a personal relationship with Him.

A marriage usually overflows with joy for a family. The wedding of the king's son should have been cause for national celebration. A royal wedding banquet would have been elaborately planned. Happy for his son, the king would want his people to share in his joy.

The first group of guests, according to the parable, was deemed unworthy because of their refusal of the king's summons and their antagonism toward him. We can surmise that the original group called to the king's banquet represented the Hebrews. They were God's chosen people. God had made numerous covenants with them.

The second group of invitees included both evil and good. The term *good* refers to the general character of a person. The word *evil* is not the term generally used to describe character, but refers to one who behaves wickedly. God invites all types of people to the banquet of His Son. No one is worthy of such mercy, but in His grace, God calls all people to salvation regardless of their past. Everyone needs to be saved and anyone can be saved.

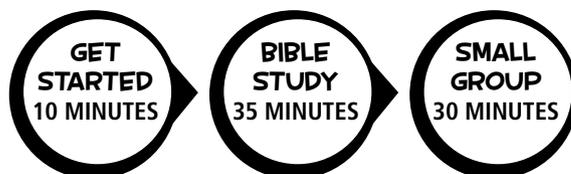
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 22:1-14

CONNECTION PASSAGE: Matthew 22:1-14

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Romans 10:13

TEXT TRUTH: God invites everyone to repent and have faith in Jesus.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Party Table Relay: tables, chairs, tablecloths, paper or plastic plates and cups, utensils, candles, bouquets of flowers, party blow-outs, wedding gift bags, “Parables in Matthew” (Poster Pack)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: tray, plastic foods, play utensils, Family Cards, “Food Tray” (DVD-ROM)
- The Bible Story: Bibles

- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack), whiteboard, dry erase marker
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Romans 10:13” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: Bibles; Explorer Guides; pens; markers, paper, and stickers (optional)

- Prayer Time: music
- Make: small mason jars with lids, light colored glitter, aerosol hairspray, battery operated votives, permanent markers
- Move: 2 serving trays, plastic food and dishes, “Review Questions” (enhanced CD)
- Examine: variety of colors of construction paper, markers, copies of “The Gospel” (enhanced CD), glue sticks, tape and/or stickers, scissors

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THE PARABLE OF THE WEDDING BANQUET

CONNECTION PASSAGE: Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus loved to teach people about God and the kingdom of God. Sometimes He would use a parable to help people understand something He wanted them to learn.

One day, Jesus told a parable about a wedding banquet.

A king gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to gather all of the people who had been invited. But the people did not want to come to the banquet. Again, the king sent servants to the people. “Tell them that the king has prepared a big banquet with food. Everything is ready. Come to the banquet.”

The people ignored the servants. They went back to work. Some of the people even beat up the king’s servants. This made the king very angry and he destroyed the city the people lived in.

Then the king told some of his servants, “The banquet is ready. Go invite the people who are not worthy to come. Invite anyone you see to the banquet.” The servants walked down the roads of the town and invited everyone. Good and bad people were invited and they came to the banquet. The banquet was now full of people.

The king entered the banquet and began to look around at all of the people. He saw one man who was not dressed right for the wedding. “Friend, how did you get in without the right wedding clothes?” The man didn’t answer. So the king ordered that the man be taken out of the banquet. The king said, “Many are invited, but few are chosen.”

Jesus told this parable to help the religious leaders and people understand that God invites everyone to love and follow Him, but many people refuse.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Some will reject God’s offer of salvation.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 22:1-14

- Sadly, some people will reject God. They will not repent and follow Jesus.
- God invites everyone to repent of their sin.
- Some people will pretend to follow God, but God knows their hearts.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Party Table Relay: tables, chairs, tablecloths, paper or plastic plates and cups, utensils, candles, bouquets of flowers, party blow-outs, wedding gift bags, “Parables in Matthew” (*Poster Pack*)

PARTY TABLE RELAY

- Display the “Parables in Matthew” poster. Allow kids to indicate which parables they remember. Point out that today they will hear one of these parables.
- The opening activity is to set the stage for today’s Bible story. Kids will set the tables, relay style, for a wedding party. At the starting line, set up two stacks of chairs, one for each team. At the other end of the room set up two tables. Put all of the party supplies into two wedding bags, one for each team, with the tablecloths on top. Place bags beside tables. Form two teams and instruct them to begin by carrying a chair to the table. Once all the chairs are in place, the relay teams can begin setting the tables with the contents of the bag. The winning team is the one whose table is completely set first.
- Say: “Based on the game we just played, what do you think today’s story might be about?” Allow for responses.
- Continue: “Today’s Bible story is from the Book of Matthew and is another parable. Does anyone remember what a parable is?” Allow for answers.
- Share: “Today’s parable takes place at a wedding banquet. A wedding is an event that you have to be invited to. In fact, most of the time you receive an invitation in the mail. Let’s move into Bible Study and find out who was invited to this wedding banquet and what happened.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Hold the tray in your hand like a waiter with plastic foods and play utensils on top.
- Ask: “What do you think of when you hear the word banquet?” (*food*) “What are your favorite foods to eat at a big meal or party?” Allow for answers and share your favorites.
- Say: “Those all sound like yummy things to eat! Our object today is about food too!”
- Distribute Family Cards. Display the “Food Tray” visual.
- Continue: “You may have an idea in your head of what a party food tray looks like, probably something more like the one I am holding rather than the one on our Family Card. This one is from the 200s and is filled with clay utensils and clay food. The concept is the same though, because food and celebrations go together. So let’s find out more about the wedding celebration and banquet.”

THE BIBLE STORY

- Say: “Our story is found in Matthew 22:1-14, so let’s turn there. While you are finding that I am going to read some verses that come before this story in Luke, where it is also recorded.”
- Read Luke 14:1-6.
- Continue: “These verses tell us that Jesus was invited into the house of a Pharisee ruler for a meal. What do we already know about the Pharisees?” (*Jewish religious leaders; they were concerned with obeying God’s laws perfectly and wrote over 700 extra laws; did not believe Jesus was God’s Son*) “What were the Pharisees known for trying to do to Jesus?” (*Make Him look bad; ask Him a question He cannot answer; turn people against Him*) “That is definitely what is happening in this passage.”
- Introduce: “We now know our setting for the story and can imagine Jesus in a house full of important religious leaders that did not like Him or believe Him. What could He say to them and what would be their response? Let’s find out!”
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Say: “Last week we said that it is important to identify who the people represent in Jesus’ parables. Let’s do that for today’s parable of the Wedding Banquet.”
- List the people on the whiteboard and let kids guess who each person represents:
 - ▶ King: God
 - ▶ King’s Son: Jesus
 - ▶ People Invited to Banquet: Pharisees (*Jews*)

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: tray, plastic foods, play utensils, Family Cards, “Food Tray” (*DVD-ROM*)
- The Bible Story: Bibles
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (*Poster Pack*), whiteboard, dry erase marker
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Romans 10:13” (*Poster Pack*)

- ▶ Unworthy People Invited to the Banquet: Gentiles
- Say: “Now that we know who the people in the parable represent, let’s look at what the story meant.”
- Ask: “Look in verse 3. How did the invited guests respond to the invitation to the wedding banquet the first and second time?” (*They rejected it, made excuses, and hurt the servants.*)
- Explain: “The invited guests or the Pharisees rejected God’s invitation to accept His Son, Jesus. They were given another chance to accept Him and instead gave many excuses and hurt God’s messengers. Look in verses 8-10 to find who the king invited next.” (*Those that were unworthy.*) “God’s offer of salvation through Jesus was first given to the Jews but after they rejected Him, He offered Himself to all people, even those considered unworthy—like the Gentiles were at this time. God invites everyone to repent of their sin and receive Jesus, but not everyone will. Just like last week’s parable of the vineyard owner, this parable shows that there are those who will reject God.”
- Ask: “Have you accepted Jesus or rejected Him? Our Text Truth says: **God invites everyone to repent and have faith in Jesus.** Let’s say that together.”
- Encourage kids to talk to you or another teacher if they have questions about their relationship with Jesus.
- Display and review the “Text Truth Strip” and “Connection Statement.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 6” video.
- Ask: “What did Kaileigh learn about wedding cakes? What did she learn about the Parable of the Wedding Feast? What can you learn from the parable?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Romans 10:13” poster.
- Say: “Let’s read our Memory Verse together.”
- Share: “This is an exciting, wonderful verse! It tells us that anyone can be saved, and anyone can have a relationship with God. We know from other verses we have learned that this relationship is available to everyone who repents and believes in Jesus. Let’s say this encouraging verse again with excitement in our voices!”

PRAYER

- Lead in prayer, thanking God for His free gift of salvation.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids find today's pages.
- Review the Bible story as boys and girls solve the "Wedding Feast Maze." Ask the kids to read aloud the Text Truth together.
- Invite kids to read about "Bible Times Weddings" and "Wedding Cakes." Challenge kids to share what Jesus was teaching with this parable.
- Review the object and ask kids to share what food they would want to eat at a wedding feast.
- Guide kids to read aloud the "Word to Know" and share how it is connected to today's Bible story.
- Conclude by helping kids answer the prompts in "Church Invitation." You may wish to provide markers and paper and stickers for the kids to make their own church invitations.

PRAYER TIME

- Play music in background and have kids spread out to pray while thinking about the Text Truth: **God invites everyone to repent and have faith in Jesus.** Encourage them to talk to you or another teacher if they have questions about repenting and having faith in Jesus.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles; Explorer Guides; pens; markers, paper, and stickers *(optional)*
- Prayer Time: music

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL):

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

WEDDING LUMINARIES

Tools: small mason jars with lids, light colored glitter, aerosol hairspray, battery operated votives, permanent markers

- Say: "We are going to make a luminaire like you might see on a table at a wedding reception. On the outside of your jar, write **You're Invited** around the bottom."
- Guide kids to spray hairspray around the inside of their jars and then pour glitter inside, put the lid on, and shake the glitter around until it sticks to the sides and bottom. Then open the jars and shake out excess glitter into a trash can or onto paper. Place battery operated votives inside the jars.
- Conclude: "You can set these jars on your dressers or desks at home to remind you that you have an invitation from God and all you have to do is receive His gift of salvation. If you already have a relationship with Him, let this be a reminder that someday you will be with Him. Let's say our Text Truth together: **God invites everyone to repent and have faith in Jesus.**"

Tips & Options: Make sure your space is well ventilated or do this craft outside. You may also choose to use baby food jars with lids instead of mason jars, and decoupage glue instead of hairspray.



FOOD TRAY REVIEW



Tools: 2 serving trays, plastic food and dishes, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)

- Ask: "Who remembers what today's object is?" (the food tray)
- Say: "We are going to see how well you can make and carry your own food tray in our own game."
- Form two teams.
- Explain that the first person on each team will arrange five plastic foods or dishes on their serving tray then carry the tray to the opposite side of the room and back. The first team to arrive back without losing any of the items on their tray gets to answer the first review question.
- Continue playing until each kid has had a turn carrying the food tray. You may use previous week's questions if you need to extend the game.
- Say: "A wedding is an exciting time and our Text Truth today is exciting too. Let's say it again together: **God invites everyone to repent and have faith in Jesus.**"

NO EXCUSES! INVITATION



Tools: variety of colors of construction paper, markers, copies of "The Gospel" (enhanced CD), glue sticks, tape and/or stickers, scissors

- Before class, make copies of "The Gospel" reduced to 60%.
- Say: "Today we are making invitations to give to someone you know that does not know Jesus."
- Give each kid a copy of "The Gospel" to glue inside the middle portion of the construction paper. Guide them to cut a line diagonally from each corner of their piece of construction paper toward the center, stopping before they come to "The Gospel" portion. They can write a note on the bottom portion of the construction paper and sign it. Fold corners of construction paper and tape the center or use a sticker. Have them write their friend's name on the outside and put stickers on it.
- Use the remaining time to go over "The Gospel" so that they are comfortable explaining it to their friend.
- Say: "Let's say our Text Truth one more time: **God invites everyone to repent and have faith in Jesus.**"



Session

7



RESURRECTION MORNING

Matthew 28:1-15

On Resurrection Sunday, Christians celebrate Jesus Christ's victory over death. The reason we celebrate becomes clearer the longer we walk with Christ. His resurrection serves as the centerpiece of our relationship with Him. He is alive, and He lives in us the moment we repent of our sin and receive His salvation.

When we think about Jesus and what He has done for us, our thoughts go immediately to the cross. Jesus' crucifixion demonstrated that He intended to sacrifice His life so all people could be saved. His death paid the price for our sin. When we study Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for us, we are led to worship Him and prompted to serve Him completely.

As Jesus died on the cross, several extraordinary events occurred. In addition to the darkness, the temple curtain was torn from top to bottom. Earthquakes shook the land and the graves were opened and dead saints were restored to life. In response, even the hardened Roman centurion exclaimed that this man must have been the Son of God.

Jewish leaders were scared. Romans were scornful. Followers of Jesus were saddened beyond heartache. Then the dawn broke three days later on the first day of the week, revealing the tremendous truth that the grave was empty and Jesus was alive!

The women who followed Jesus from Galilee had witnessed His death, watched His burial, and came that morning to pay last respects with ointments suitable for a burial. The women fully expected to see a dead body. The Roman soldiers standing guard over the tomb were hardened troops whose lives would have been forfeit had they slept on duty or abandoned their posts. They had nothing to gain and everything to lose if anything happened to Jesus' body. Nothing about this scene suggested Jesus could have merely swooned and revived. No reasonable investigation could forensically demonstrate any other conclusion than the truth: Jesus had died and been resurrected. He is alive today and reigns forevermore. He is Messiah. He is King. He is our risen Lord!

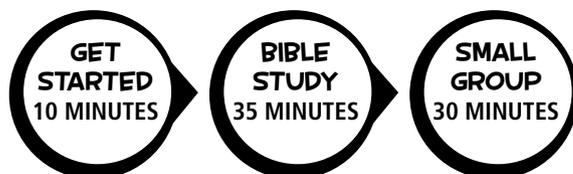
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 28:1-15

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 27:11-52; 28:1-15

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 28:6

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Bible Skills Game:* numbered cube, game pieces, “Before and After Gameboard” (Poster Pack), Bibles

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In:* Family Cards, “Oil and Spice Jars” (DVD-ROM)
- The Bible Story:* Bibles; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “Passion Week Map” (Poster Pack)

Examine the Text:

Bibles, whiteboard, dry erase marker, “The Gospel” (enhanced CD)

- Play the Video:* Explore the Bible on Location videos

Memory Verse:

“Matthew 28:6” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide:* Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Make:* small notebooks, patterned tape, markers, pens, scissors
- Move:* index cards, tape, marker
- Examine:* toilet paper, markers

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle.

Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle.

For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

JESUS' CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 27:11-52; 28:1-15

The religious leaders did not like Jesus. They wanted to get rid of Him. One of Jesus' disciples, Judas, went to the religious leaders and made a deal. Judas agreed to betray Jesus in exchange for some silver.

The leaders had Jesus arrested and they sent Him to Pilate, the governor.

Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus told him. "You have said it."

The religious leaders began telling lies about Jesus, but Jesus said nothing. Pilate was amazed at Jesus. He decided to let the people decide what he should do. Pilate could let a criminal named Barabbas go free or he could release Jesus. Pilate knew that the religious leaders were jealous of Jesus and that is why they had arrested Him. The religious leaders got all of the people to tell Pilate that they wanted Barabbas to be free. When Pilate asked the people about Jesus, the people said they wanted to crucify Him.

Finally, Pilate agreed to free Barabbas, and let the people crucify Jesus.

As Jesus was dying on the cross, the veil in the temple split down the middle. Jesus called out to God and Jesus died on the cross. One of the soldiers at the cross, a centurion, began to praise God. He understood that Jesus was innocent of sin; Jesus was righteous.

Jesus was buried in a tomb and Pilate sent soldiers to guard the tomb.

Then people observed the Sabbath. On the morning after the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene and another Mary took spices and perfumes to His tomb. Suddenly, there was an earthquake! An angel rolled the stone away and was sitting on it. The guards were so afraid that they fainted!

The angel spoke, "Don't be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus. He is not here. He has been resurrected just like He promised! Come and see the empty tomb, then go tell the disciples."

The women were afraid and happy at the same time. They ran to tell the disciples the good news when suddenly Jesus appeared to them. The women worshiped Jesus and He gave them a message for the disciples, "Go and tell them to go to Galilee, and I will see them there." Jesus was alive!

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God's people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Jesus willingly died on the cross to rescue me from sin. God raised Him from the grave. Jesus defeated sin and death!



KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE:
Matthew 28:1-15

- Jesus willingly died to pay for our sin.
- God raised Him from the grave.
- Jesus defeated sin and death.
- Jesus is alive!
- Anyone can repent of his sin and trust Jesus as his Lord and Savior.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills Game: numbered cube, game pieces, “Before and After Gameboard” (*Poster Pack*), Bibles

OPTION:

- If your kids know the Books of the Bible well, change the game by challenging kids to locate the book they land on within ten seconds to earn an extra space on the gameboard.

BIBLE SKILLS GAME

- Display the “Before and After Gameboard.” Decide if kids will play solo, in pairs, or in teams.
- Explain that each kid will take a turn rolling the numbered cube. The number revealed is how many spaces they can advance on the game board. If they can name the book of the Bible that comes before the book they land on and the book of the Bible that comes after the book they land on, they earn a bonus space. If they cannot name the books, encourage them to locate the answers in the table of contents page of a Bible, but do not reward the extra space.
- Play until you have a winner or time runs out.
- Transition: “Every book of the Bible teaches us about God’s plan. God’s plan was to send Jesus. Why did God send Jesus?” (*Allow kids to answer.*)
- Say: “Our Bible story today will be about Jesus’ death and resurrection. Let’s learn more about Jesus’ work on the cross and what He did for us so that we could be free from sin.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Distribute Family Cards as kids take their seats. Make conversation about the previous object, asking their thoughts about it. Display the “Oil and Spice Jars” visual.
- Say: “The Book of Mark tells us that when Mary and Mary Magdalene approached Jesus’ tomb, they were carrying spices and they were very sad. They wanted to care for Jesus’ body, but did not want His death to be real. Imagine their shock and excitement in discovering that these spices and oils were not needed!”
- Encourage: “The story of Jesus’ death and resurrection is one that many of you are familiar with and you might be tempted to not pay close attention. There is no other story that is more important for us to know, believe, and obey. So listen closely to the Bible story and listen to Jesus as He speaks to you. Then use your Family Card to talk about the story with your family.”

THE BIBLE STORY

- Display the “Passion Week Map.” Highlight some of the events that kids have studied so far. As you study today’s Bible story, point out locations on the map to help kids track the events.
- Say: “Even though you may know the story of Jesus’ death and resurrection very well, it is a story that will still grab your attention and speak to your heart and mind. As I retell the events Matthew recorded, pretend you were there watching Jesus’ arrest and death, and that you walked with the women as they went to His tomb. Imagine what you would be thinking and feeling.”
- Have kids open their Bibles to Matthew 27:11-52 and 28:1-10.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Say: “Today’s Text Truth takes on new meaning now that you feel like you were there when these life and world changing events took place. Let’s say it together: **Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!** Say it again with even more excitement!”
- Continue: “Not only did Jesus die on the cross to pay for my sin, He died willingly, and in doing so He defeated sin and death!” Display the “Connection Statement.”
- Conclude: “Because of this, anyone can repent of their sin and trust Jesus as their Lord and Savior.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Ask: “Who are the people in the Bible story that we just heard that rejected Jesus as God’s Son?” Guide them to refer to Matthew 27:11-52 for help.
- Write their answers on the whiteboard: *chief priests, elders, Pilate, the*

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: Family Cards, “Oil and Spice Jars” (DVD-ROM)
- The Bible Story: Bibles; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “Passion Week Map” (Poster Pack)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, whiteboard, dry erase marker, “The Gospel” (enhanced CD)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 28:6” (Poster Pack)

TIP:

- A kid-friendly gospel presentation video is available for you to use at <http://lifeway.com/kidsgospelpresentation>.

crowd, soldiers, people passing by, scribes, and robber crucified on one side of Him.

- Say: “Now let’s read a few more verses from that passage. Open your Bibles to Matthew 28:1-15.”
- Ask for a couple of volunteers to read this passage.
- Say: “Mary, Mary Magdalene, and the disciples did not fully understand who Jesus was either. They still did not understand why He died. But they did not reject Him as so many others did. Imagine their surprise and joy to see Him alive!”
- Continue: “All of these people that were listed in just those few verses rejected Jesus. We know there were many more before and after that rejected Him. Yet, the story of Jesus is still taught all over the world, it is still spreading to those who have never heard, and the Bible that contains this story is the best-selling book in the world. Even those who have rejected Him, talk about Him. Do not join the list of those that reject Him. Remember, anyone can repent of their sin and trust Jesus as Lord and Savior.”
- Use “The Gospel” poster to share and invite those that have questions to talk to you or another leader.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 7” video.
- Ask: “What did Kaileigh say completely changed because Jesus was raised from the dead?” (*history*) “Why did Jesus die on the cross?” (***Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!***)

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 28:6” poster.
- Say: “Our memory verse today needs to be said with excitement for it is truly great news! Let’s say it together.”
- Form two groups and take turns letting one group say the verse while the other group pretends to be Mary and Mary Magdalene hearing the news.

PRAYER

- Ask the class to close their eyes.
- Say: “Our Bible story today is the good news of the gospel. We have talked about what it means to receive the good news and follow Jesus. We also need to make sure we are sharing it! Let’s pray for opportunities to share the good news.”
- Close in prayer and dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Lead girls and boys to locate today's pages in their Explorer Guides.
- Ask a volunteer to read aloud the information about the spice and oil jars.
- Guide kids to complete the crossword to review today's Bible story.
- Invite kids to take turns reading the names in "Who Saw Jesus After the Resurrection?" Ask kids to share why they think Jesus appeared to all of these people and why it is recorded in the Bible.
- Help boys and girls read the "Word to Know" and review how that word was a part of today's Bible study.
- Invite kids to spread out and quietly complete the reflection activity.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask for a volunteer to share their testimony. If no one is comfortable doing that, then share your own.
- Say: "Thank you for sharing how the gospel changed your life!" (*I am so glad I got to share with you how the gospel changed my life!*) "Let's pray and thank God for the gospel."

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

TIP:

- You may need to meet with the person you ask early and hear their testimony before they share it with the kids.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

MY JOURNEY WITH JESUS JOURNAL

Tools: small notebooks, patterned tape, markers, pens, scissors

- Say: "Today we will make a journal that will allow you to write down your thoughts and feelings about today's Bible story, and then use it at home for your daily Bible reading."
- Instruct kids to cover the front and backs of their notebooks with patterned tape. (*Have boy friendly patterns available.*) Then use a marker to write *My Journey With Jesus Journal* on the outside. Use pens to write the following titles on the next three pages: *My Thoughts on the Crucifixion, My Thoughts on the Resurrection, and What Will Change Because of What I Learned.*
- Say: "You can fill out these three pages and then use this book to write down your thoughts about what you read everyday in the Bible."
- Option: Ask kids to bring the journals with them each week to write down their responses to the Bible story.
- Conclude: "Your responses to these prompts probably remind you of today's Text Truth, let's say it again together: **Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!**"





WHO AM I

Tools: index cards, tape, marker

- Write the names of all of the people from today's Bible story and previous Bible stories on individual index cards. Tape one card to the back of each kid. Instruct kids to try and figure out what Bible person they are by asking other kids to describe the person written on their card. Once they guess the right answer, they may remove their card and continue helping others identify theirs.
- Say: "This was a great way to review all of our Bible stories from Matthew. Now let's review today's Text Truth, say it with me: **Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!**"
- If you have time, allow kids to trade cards and play the game again.



ALL WRAPPED UP

Tools: toilet paper, markers

- Form teams and have each team select one kid to be Jesus. The rest of the team will wrap "Jesus" in the toilet paper (*don't allow them to cover anyone's face*), representing the linens He was buried in. After their wrapping is approved by a teacher, they must roll out more toilet paper and write out today's Text Truth correctly without tearing the paper. (**Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!**)
- Once they complete this, their team will read the Text Truth together and "Jesus" will break out of the linens. The first team to complete this is the winner.

JESUS WILL RETURN



Matthew 24:36-51

Forecasting the future is big business. Investors spend millions of dollars for analyses, hoping to know where the stock market is heading. Television stations hire meteorologists to predict the weather.

Jesus' disciples were eager to know when events regarding Jesus' future reign would occur. After His resurrection, the disciples hoped the time had come for Israel to rise from servitude with Jesus as king (*Acts 1:6*). Jesus not only wanted the Twelve to understand what would come in the end of days, He also desired that they would comprehend the serious challenges facing His followers in the future. We cannot know the hour of Jesus' coming, and idle speculation about such events is of little worth. However, Jesus' teachings can motivate us to live each day in a state of readiness for His return.

Jesus did not want people to guess futilely about the future, but to be ready for it by living for God in the present. Jesus compared His second coming to the flood of Noah's day, focusing on how both were unexpected and sudden. Being reminded of the past, believers can prepare for the future.

Jesus' allusions to Old Testament persons and events are part of the internal evidence that supports the inerrancy of Scripture. Jesus would not have used fictional material to support factual prophecy. In this case, He reminded the disciples of what happened during the days of Noah (*see Gen. 5-8*). Jesus likened this period of time with the coming of the Son of Man.

Jesus prepared the disciples for His death by pointing to His return. He reminded them of their need to be alert, since no one but the Father knows when Jesus' coming will take place. Jesus challenged His followers to be faithful in anticipation of His return. He also promised that faithful followers will be rewarded.

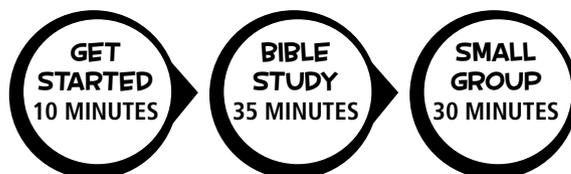
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 24:36-51

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-8

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 24:42

TEXT TRUTH: We should faithfully serve God while we wait for Jesus to return.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Tic-Tac-Toe Text Truth Review: 9 chairs, “Text Truth Review” (enhanced CD), pencils

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: Family Cards, “Starting Block” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: clock or watch with date and time, Bibles
- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)

- Play the Video: *Explore the Bible on Location* videos

- Memory Verse: “Matthew 24:42” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Move: tape, candy, “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD)
- Examine: 12-15 items from the room

- Make: “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), liquid white glue, table salt, cups of water, food coloring, eye droppers, heavyweight paper

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

JESUS WILL RETURN ONE DAY

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-8

After Jesus' death and resurrection, He spent some time with His followers on earth. For 40 days, Jesus showed His followers that He was alive! He appeared to them many times and continued to teach them about the kingdom of God.

Jesus told them to stay in Jerusalem until God fulfilled His promise. Jesus said, "You will be given power when the Holy Spirit comes. You will be witnesses for Me in Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

One day, He led His followers to Bethany. Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed the people. While He was blessing them, He returned to heaven. Jesus' followers worshiped Him before they returned to Jerusalem. The people were full of joy. They continued to go visit the temple and praise God.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God's people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Only God knows when Jesus will return, so we should be ready at all times.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 24:36-51

- Jesus spent time with His followers, proving to them that He was alive!
- Jesus gave His followers a mission.
- Everyone can serve God by telling others about Jesus.
- Jesus will return one day.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Tic-Tac-Toe Text Truth Review: 9 chairs, “Text Truth Review” (*enhanced CD*), pencils

PREPARATION:

- Prior to class remove or cover the “Text Truth Strips” and set up 9 chairs in a tic-tac-toe pattern. Print the “Text Truth Review” and make 6 copies. Cut the truths apart, keeping the same ones together.

TIC-TAC-TOE TEXT TRUTH REVIEW

- Form teams (*at least 6 people on each team*), assigning one to be *Xs* and the other *Os*. Have the teams stand on opposite sides of the chairs. Give each person a number.
- Say: “I am going to call out 2 numbers and if it is your number, run to the front and take a Text Truth slip and pencil. As soon as you complete the Text Truth, show it to me and then, if it is correct, you may choose a chair in the tic-tac-toe formation. We will continue until all 6 people from 1 team are in the formation or there is a winner.”
- Continue playing until you have completed all of the previous 7 Text Truths.
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Greet kids as they take their seats. Congratulate the winners of the tic-tac-toe game.
- Ask: “What are the two most important lines in any race?” (*starting line and finish line*)
- Say: “The Bible says that the Christian life is a like a race and we need to start well and finish well.”
- Distribute Family Cards. Display the “Starting Block” visual.
- Say: “It is very important not to begin a race before you are instructed to do so and to keep your eye on the finish line. The same is true for Christians. In today’s story Jesus told His followers to wait for Him and be ready for His return. Just like a swimmer will wait for the starting signal and keep her eyes on the finish line, we should also be watching for Jesus’ return and keeping our eyes fixed on Him.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Prior to class, obtain a clock or watch that shows the time and date.
- Hold up the clock or watch and ask kids to describe its features.
- Say: “It is important in our world to know what day it is and what time it is. Any time we learn of an event, the first question we ask is ‘When is it?’ Even when we talk about something that happened in the past, we ask ‘When did that happen?’”
- Ask: “If I told you that I would come by your house and take you to a movie, what would you ask?” (*When, what day, what time is the movie?*)
- Say: “If we are concerned with dates and time for these little everyday activities, then of course we are much more concerned with time and dates for big events.”
- Ask kids to turn to Matthew 24:36-44. Have a volunteer read verse 36.
- Say: “These verses remind us that even though Jesus promised to return, we do not know when Jesus will return. Jesus goes on to give instructions about what to do in the meantime.”
- Have a volunteer read verses 37-44.
- Ask: “What did Jesus say in verse 44 that we should be doing while waiting for His return?” (*Be ready.*)
- Say: “Let’s find out how we can be ready by hearing today’s Bible story.”

THE BIBLE STORY

- Ask kids to turn to Acts 1:1-8.
- Say: “Last week we left off at Jesus being resurrected from the dead. Today’s story tells what happened in the days after that.”
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Ask: “What did Jesus tell us that we should be doing until He returns?” Refer them to Acts 1:8.

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: Family Cards, “Starting Block” (*DVD-ROM*)
- Examine the Text: clock or watch with date and time, Bibles
- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (*Poster Pack*)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 24:42” (*Poster Pack*)

- Ask: “What does it mean to be a witness for Jesus?” (*To share the good news about Him.*) “Where does He tell us to take the good news?” (*Everywhere!*)
- Say: “Our Text Truth reminds us of our task. Let’s read it together: **We should faithfully serve God while we wait for Jesus to return.**”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and “Connection Statement.”
- Continue: “Let’s read Luke’s account of the ascension in chapter 24, verses 50-53.”
- Ask: “What did they do after Jesus ascended into heaven?” (*Continually praised God in the temple.*)
- Say: “Until Jesus returns again, we should be praising God too!”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 8” video.
- Ask: “Why is being ready important for swimming? What did Kaileigh and Joel learn about being ready for Jesus to return?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 24:42” poster.
- Say: “Let’s read our Memory Verse together.”
- Have kids come up with actions to go along with the words in the verse. Repeat the verse using these actions.

PRAYER

- Ask kids to share ways that they can live out today’s Text Truth: **We should faithfully serve God while we wait for Jesus to return.** Have them say sentence prayers asking God to help them to do these things, each kid mentioning one of the ways they previously shared.
- Close by praying for the kids to keep their focus on Jesus and be ready for His return.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Invite boys and girls to open their Explorer Guides to today's pages.
- Ask a volunteer to review today's object. Lead everyone to solve the code puzzle and invite kids to share their answers to the question.
- Select volunteers to read about the earth and people groups. Discuss the importance of sharing the gospel.
- Guide kids to complete the "Ways to Serve" activity and think about how they can live out the Text Truth.
- Help everyone read aloud today's "Word to Know."

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask for kids to share praises and prayer requests. Then ask for volunteers to pray for each request.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

FOLLOW HIM, WAIT ON HIM



Tools: tape, candy, "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD)

- Put down a piece of tape for the starting line and finish line. Place the pieces of candy on a table right behind the finish line. (Put out enough pieces of candy for each kid to get one.)

- Say: "We talked earlier about the importance of watching for Jesus' return. While we are running life's race we are either following what He has told us to do or waiting on Him to tell us what to do next. Today's game is played like Red Light, Green Light, except your instructions will be 'Wait on Him, Follow Him.'"
- Have kids line up on the starting line and begin calling out "Follow Him" and "Wait on Him." The first kid to reach the table may take a piece of candy and be seated until everyone else finishes. Play again if time allows.
- Conclude: "While we are waiting on Jesus to return we need to remember what our Text Truth says. Let's say it again together: **We should faithfully serve God while we wait for Jesus to return.**"



WHAT'S MISSING?

Tools: 12-15 items from the room

- Pile up various items from the classroom in the center of the room. Have kids walk around the pile and try to memorize what is in it. Choose one player to close his eyes and then ask another player to remove one of the objects and hide it. Remind the rest of the group to be quiet and not give any hints about what was taken. Instruct the player with eyes closed to open his eyes and try to guess which object is missing. Only give the player one guess and then the rest of the group can tell if the answer was right or wrong. Continue to play until each kid has a chance to guess.
- Say: "Jesus' followers probably felt like something would be missing as they watched Jesus ascend into heaven. We know that Jesus is always with us in Spirit. We cannot see Him or touch Him, but just as those missing objects were still in the room with us, so Jesus is always with us. Someday we will see Him and until then, we need to follow what our Text Truth says: **We should faithfully serve God while we wait for Jesus to return.**"



SPREAD THE NEWS

Tools: "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), liquid white glue, table salt, cups of water, food coloring, eye droppers, heavyweight paper

- Before class, stir a few drops of food coloring into each cup of water.

- Give each kid a piece of heavyweight paper. Invite kids to draw various patterns on their papers using the liquid glue.
- When kids finish with the glue, help them pour salt over the glue. Carefully shake off excess salt.
- Distribute the cups of colorful water. Invite kids to use eye droppers to carefully drop some water onto their salt lines.
- Ask: "What happened?" (*The color should spread down the salt line.*)
- Say: "When you look at your salt art, I want you to remember that God wants the gospel to spread. How do we spread the good news of Jesus?" (*Tell others!*) "Why do we want others to know about Jesus?"
- As the kids' artwork dries, review today's Bible story and the Text Truth: **We should faithfully serve God while we wait for Jesus to return.**
- Challenge kids to name ways they can spread the gospel by faithfully serving God.



Session 9



THE LAST SUPPER

Matthew 26:17-30

Jesus introduced the Lord's Supper for His disciples then and now. In a way, the supper serves the same purpose as an anniversary celebration. It is a time of remembrance. When we observe the Lord's Supper, we remember Jesus' sacrifice for us. When we take the bread, we recall His body that was broken so we could be made whole. The cup brings to our minds Jesus' blood that He shed so we could have eternal life. Every time we observe the Lord's Supper, we remember something else. We recall that we've given our lives to Him. Also, we have the opportunity to renew our pledge of loyalty to Him. Equally important, the Lord's Supper encourages us to look forward to the day when Christ will come again.

The last week prior to Jesus' crucifixion coincided with the Jewish festival of Passover. As Jesus directed His disciples to make provisions for their observance of the Passover meal, He was preparing them for His death. Passover was associated with the festival of Unleavened Bread (*Ex. 23:15*). This celebration lasted seven days and reflected God's deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt (*Ex. 12: 15-17*).

Jesus often referred to "My time." He was fully aware of His ultimate destiny at the cross. Previously, Jesus reminded various people that His time had not yet arrived. As this Passover approached, Jesus' time was near.

During the supper, Jesus gave new meaning to two elements of the Passover meal, interpreting the unleavened bread and the cup in terms of His sacrificial death. The Passover pointed forward to the Lamb of God who would take away our sins (*John 1:29*).

The Passover reminded Jewish people of God's covenant and their salvation from servitude in Egypt. Like other aspects of the sacrificial system, the Passover found its culmination in Jesus' death and resurrection. Our lesson about the Lord's Supper helps us gain a deeper appreciation for the new covenant with God made possible through Jesus' shed blood and broken body.

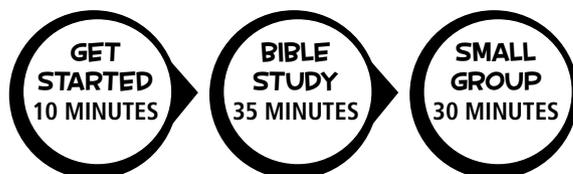
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 26:17-30

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 26:17-30; John 13:1-15

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Luke 22:19

TEXT TRUTH: The Last Supper demonstrated a new covenant where Jesus would make the final sacrifice for sin.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Unleavened Bread: *"Allergy Alert"* (enhanced CD), unleavened bread, grapes, paper products

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: *Family Cards, Bibles, "Cup and Bread"* (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: *Bibles, "Passion Week Map"* (Poster Pack)
- The Bible Story: *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements"* (Poster Pack)

- Play the Video: *Explore the Bible on Location* videos

- Memory Verse: *"Luke 22:19"* (Poster Pack), sticky notes

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Make: *"Allergy Alert"* (enhanced CD), white ceramic tiles, isopropyl alcohol, clear acrylic protective spray, permanent markers (various colors), droppers, tablecloths

- Examine: *"Password Game List"* (enhanced CD), bag

- Move: *"Review Questions"* (enhanced CD), plastic bowling pins or empty water bottles, plastic ball, tape

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

THE LAST SUPPER

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 26:17-30; John 13:1-15

Jesus loved the disciples, but Jesus knew that one of them, Judas Iscariot, would betray Him. Jesus trusted that God was in control. Jesus had come from God, and soon He would go back to God. Jesus knew that He would soon die on the cross. Before that time, the Jewish people would celebrate Passover once again. Passover was a special celebration to remember how God had rescued the Israelites from Egypt long, long ago.

The disciples came to Jesus, “Where do You want us to prepare the Passover meal for You to eat?”

“Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The Teacher says: My time is near; I am celebrating the Passover with My disciples at your place.’”

The disciples obeyed and prepared the Passover meal. When evening arrived, Jesus was reclining at the table with the disciples. He told them, “One of you will betray Me.” Jesus revealed that Judas would betray him.

Jesus also led the disciples to have the first Lord’s Supper. Jesus explained that the bread was a symbol for His body that would suffer and die for them. The drink was a symbol of the blood Jesus would shed to establish a new covenant.

After the Lord’s Supper, Jesus and the disciples walked to the Mount of Olives.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

The Lord’s Supper reminds us of why Jesus died on the cross.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 26:17-30

- Jesus tried to prepare the disciples for the events that would soon happen.
- The Lord’s Supper is a special time when believers remember Jesus’ sacrifice for our sin.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Unleavened Bread: “Allergy Alert” (*enhanced CD*), unleavened bread, grapes, paper products

OPTION:

- Look online for an easy recipe for unleavened bread. Help kids follow the recipe to make your own unleavened bread.

UNLEAVENED BREAD

- Display the bread and grapes.
- Ask: “Can anyone take a guess at what we are going to learn about today?” Allow for responses. If no one guesses give a hint: “Today’s Bible story is about the Last Supper.” Also explain that we are going back to something that happened before the crucifixion.
- Invite kids to guess what is different about the bread you have brought. After a few guesses, explain that it is called *unleavened bread*.
- Ask: “What important event in the Book of Exodus involved unleavened bread?” (*Moses told the Israelites to pack it when they left Egypt because leavened bread had yeast in it and would take too long to rise and bake.*)
- Say: “Each year during Passover, the Israelites would eat unleavened bread to remind them of the Exodus. The leaven or yeast also represents sin. Leaven spreads all through the bread dough, getting into each part. Sin is just like that; it fills every part of our life. Sin has such a strong effect that it does not just affect our life, but also those around us and sometimes the whole church.”
- Allow kids to eat some of the bread with the grapes.
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Greet kids and pass out Family Cards. Display the “Cup and Bread” visual.
- Ask: “Do any of you remember a meal that you had that was so special you will never forget it?” Allow kids and teachers to share examples.
- Say: “We are going to be talking about a supper that Jesus and His disciples experienced that was very memorable. I am sure that everyone there remembered every detail in the years to come. We have a lot of the detail recorded in God’s Word and we have this same type of meal in church regularly.”
- Ask: “What was this special meal called?” (*Last Supper*) “What do we call it when we celebrate it today?” (*Lord’s Supper, Communion*)
- Continue: “It is so neat that God associated such an important event with an activity that we do several times a day—eating! He knew that it would be easier for us to remember this significant event if it was connected with something that we have to do to live.”
- Say: “Many times, a certain Bible passage is read when we have the Lord’s Supper together as a church body. Let’s read it now.”
- Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.
- Say: “Now let’s read the story and find out what happened before and after this special meal.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Say: “The text today centers around the celebration of Passover.”
- Have a volunteer read Matthew 26:17-19.
- Ask: “What do you remember about Passover’s meaning?” (*An 8 day festival celebrating the release of the Israelites from being held as slaves in Egypt.*)
- Share: “We have an important event in our nation’s history that we celebrate every July 4th. What is it?” (*Celebrating America’s independence and the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.*) “We do things on that day to celebrate and remember the price paid for our freedom. In a similar way, the Israelites celebrated their freedom from slavery during Passover and the Passover meal was a reminder of how God had rescued His people.”
- Continue: “This Passover meal was extra special because it would be the last one Jesus shared with His friends. An interesting conversation occurred at this meal that let the disciples know that there would be dark, sad days ahead.”
- Display the “Passion Week Map” and point out where many people believe today’s story took place.

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: Family Cards, Bibles, “Cup and Bread” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Passion Week Map” (Poster Pack)
- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Luke 22:19” (Poster Pack), sticky notes

THE BIBLE STORY

- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Say: “The Passover meal was always used as a reminder of what the Israelites escaped from in Egypt. In this passage, Jesus gives the disciples something new to remember while eating the meal.”
- Ask: “What did Jesus say in Matthew 26:26 that bread was a symbol of?” (*His body that would suffer and die for them.*) “And in Matthew 26:27-28, what did Jesus say the drink was a symbol of?” (*The blood Jesus would shed to establish a new covenant.*)
- Explain: “Our Text Truth today is a reminder to us about the meaning of the Last Supper: **The Last Supper demonstrated a new covenant where Jesus would make the final sacrifice for sin.**”
- Say: “Jesus tried to prepare His friends for the events that would be happening soon. We now have the Lord’s Supper to remind us about what Jesus did on the cross for us.”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and “Connection Statement.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 9” video.
- Say: “Raise your hand if you want to try Joel’s cooking What meal did the disciples share with Jesus? What did Jesus teach them at the meal?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Option: Use this time to eat the unleavened bread and grapes.
- Display the “Luke 22:19” poster.
- Say: “Let’s read our Memory Verse together.”
- Cover one word of the verse at a time with a sticky note until the entire verse is covered and say it one more time.

PRAYER

- Say: “The story of the Last Supper helps us to see the pain Jesus went through before the cross as He was betrayed by a friend—Judas Iscariot. He understands what it feels like to have promises broken, to have people turn their backs on Him, and to be tempted. Unlike us, though, Jesus never breaks a promise, never turns His back, and provides a way out when we are tempted. Let’s pray and give thanks for how good He is to us!”
- Ask for a kid or teacher to lead in prayer.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids turn to today's pages.
- Review today's Bible story by asking kids to solve the word search puzzle. Invite boys and girls to share how each word was a part of today's Bible study.
- Ask a volunteer to read about "Reclining at the Table." If you have room, encourage kids to try to "recline" as they did in Bible times.
- Select volunteers to read about the Passover and what was served at the Passover meal.
- Share the information about the object and review the Text Truth.
- Guide kids to read aloud today's "Word to Know." Help kid complete "What Does it Say?"

PRAYER TIME

- Ask for a volunteer to lead their small group in prayer.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.



REMINDER COASTER

Tools: "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), white ceramic tiles, isopropyl alcohol, clear acrylic protective spray, permanent markers (various colors), droppers, tablecloths

- Say: "One of our objects today was a cup that reminds us of the cup used by Jesus and the disciples at the Last Supper. We are going to make a special coaster to help you remember the meaning behind the Last Supper and Jesus' sacrifice."
- Give each kid a ceramic tile and instruct her to write today's Bible verse and her name with a permanent marker on the back. Then they can color the front of it any way they choose, using multiple colors. Use droppers to add small amounts of isopropyl alcohol on the design. Watch the colors spread and change. Let it dry for at least an hour and then spray with finishing spray outside. *(Consider letting it dry during the week and spray at the beginning of class the following week. Then the kids can take it home at the end of class.)*
- Say: "Sin affects our lives much like that alcohol on the permanent marker. It starts as just a small drop and then it moves in and takes over our life. Let's say our Text Truth again as we think about His sacrifice: **The Last Supper demonstrated a new covenant where Jesus would make the final sacrifice for sin.**"



LAST SUPPER PASSWORD

Tools: "Password Game List" (enhanced CD), bag

- Form 2 teams (A & B) and begin by drawing a word from the bag and showing it to the first hint-givers from each team. They both start with the same word. The hint-giver from Team A then gives one word to her team as a hint to the correct answer. If Team A guesses the word correctly, they receive a point and switch hint-givers for each team. If Team A guesses incorrectly, then Team B gets a chance to give another word as a hint to his team and they get a point if they guess correctly. If they guess incorrectly, then that round keeps going until the word is guessed. After that, begin again with new hint-givers and a new word until all of the words have been guessed.
- Say: "Reviewing those keywords was also a great way to review our Bible story from today! It also reminds us of Jesus' great sacrifice. Let's say our Text Truth again to help us remember the main idea from today's story: **The Last Supper demonstrated a new covenant where Jesus would make the final sacrifice for sin.**"
- Option: To vary the difficulty level, you can choose to allow kids to use hand motions or not.



BIBLE REVIEW BOWLING TOURNAMENT

Tools: "Review Questions" (enhanced CD), plastic bowling pins or empty water bottles, plastic ball, tape

- Mark the floor with tape where the pins should be placed and where the bowler should stand. Set up pins and line kids up behind the line. Ask the "Review Questions" (use previous weeks if needed). If the bowler gets it correct, give them two chances to knock down the pins. If they get a strike, the pins can be set up for another chance. Give 10 points for each correct answer and 1 point per pin, 15 points for a strike.
- Say: "That was a great review of our Bible story. Let's review our Text Truth one more time: **The Last Supper demonstrated a new covenant where Jesus would make the final sacrifice for sin.**"
- Options: Form teams or play as individuals, or have 2 lanes with 2 teachers asking questions.



Session

10



JESUS PRAYED IN THE GARDEN

Matthew 26:36-46

Our study this week focuses on Jesus' prayer in the hours leading up to His betrayal and arrest. Knowing His crucifixion was near, Jesus sought the face of His Father. As we study this passage, remember that Jesus was fully human as well as fully God. His experience not only revealed His humanity, but it also gives us an example to follow in our times of crisis. As the Son submitted His will to the Father, even so we find strength for difficulty by yielding ourselves to the Father's plan.

With Peter, James, and John nearby, Jesus prayed earnestly as He faced crucifixion. Jesus committed to following the Father's will no matter what. In Gethsemane, we witness Jesus' humanity interact with His deity as He prayed honestly and passionately. The word *Gethsemane* refers to a mechanism for making olive oil. As the olives were pressed, the precious oil would be harvested. Even so, on this night, Jesus would be pressed between His human nature and His divine purpose.

Ultimately, Jesus knew the Father's will and yielded to it. Perhaps one of the most amazing statements in Scripture is "not as I will, but as You will." Jesus' humanity withdrew from the painful path that lay ahead. Yet, even as Jesus prayed that the cup might pass, He reached out and embraced it, being obedient even to the cross (*Phil. 2:8*). As believers, we are compelled to accept God's direction and will in our lives.

The intensity with which Jesus prayed should have caused the disciples to observe His passion with amazement and intercede for Him. However, on several occasions, Jesus found the men sleeping. God's timing is sovereign and will move forward regardless of our hesitation or failure to stay alert and watchful. Jesus declared that the time had come for Him to pay the price for humanity's sin. Jesus came to earth for the sole purpose of laying down His life as a sacrifice. He would not turn away from that task. As the betrayer approached, Jesus went forward to fulfill His destiny.

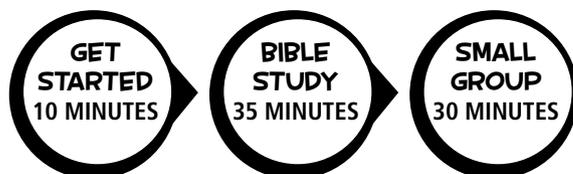
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 26:36-46

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:40-46

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 26:39

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus obeyed God's plan to rescue us from sin.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Books of the Bible Blocks: “Books of the Bible List” (enhanced CD), large interlocking blocks, tape, bag, “Bible Books” (Books of the Bible Posters)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: Family Cards, “Olive Press” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles

- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack), pens, paper
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 26:39” (Poster Pack), pens, paper
- Prayer: “Timeline” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Make: scrapbook paper, magazines, scissors, glue, pencils
- Move: prize for winner(s) (optional)
- Examine: whiteboard, dry erase marker, “Review Questions” (enhanced CD)

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

JESUS IN GETHSEMANE

CONNECTION PASSAGES:

Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:40-46

After the Lord's Supper, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives to a garden called Gethsemane. He asked the disciples to pray for Him. Jesus asked Peter, James, and John to come with Him. Jesus began to be very sad and deeply distressed. He told the three disciples, "My soul is deeply sad, please stay awake with Me."

Jesus walked a little away and fell facedown on the ground and prayed to God. "God, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. I will obey You God, not My will, but Yours."

Jesus walked back to the three disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you stay awake for one hour? Stay awake and pray that you will resist temptation. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

A second time, Jesus walked away and prayed. "If this cannot happen unless I drink it, I will do what You will."

Jesus walked to the disciples and saw they were sleeping. For a third time, He walked away and prayed.

Once again, Jesus went and found the disciples sleeping, not praying. Jesus woke them up. While Jesus was speaking to the disciples, a mob appeared with Judas. Jesus told the disciples, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up. My betrayer is near."

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God's people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Jesus prayed and committed to obeying God's will.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 26:36-46

- Jesus spoke of a cup and drink as a way of talking about dying on the cross.
- Jesus was willing to obey God, even when it was hard.
- Obeying God is not always easy.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Books of the Bible Blocks: “Books of the Bible List” (*enhanced CD*), large interlocking blocks, tape, bag, “Bible Books” (*Books of the Bible Posters*)

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE BLOCKS

- Prior to class print the “Books of the Bible List” and cut apart. Tape book names to large interlocking bricks and pile them up in a bag.
- Say: “This morning we are going to review our books of the Bible with a game. First let’s look at our ‘Bible Books’ poster and read through them together.” After this, remove or cover the poster.
- Let each kid take a block from the bag. Then have them work together to stack them in the correct order. (*You may need to do this in sections so that it does not fall over.*) Offer assistance when needed. Allow them to come back and draw another block once theirs is placed. After all of the blocks are in the correct order, read through them again together.
- Say: “It is great to know what order the books of the Bible come in so that we can easily look up Scriptures whenever we want! Hopefully this game helped you get a little more familiar with these wonderful books.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Greet kids as they are seated.
- Say: “Sometimes we go through things in life that we can only respond to by praying.”
- Ask: “Can you give me an example of a situation that would cause you to pray for help?” Allow for answers.
- Say: “Our Bible story today is about a time Jesus knew that He could pray to God. Our object gives us some information about the location of where Jesus prayed. Can anyone guess the name of this place?” Allow for answers.
- Continue: “Yes, it was Gethsemane and in Hebrew, that means oil press.”
- Distribute Family Cards and display the “Olive Press” visual.
- Say: “This is a picture of an olive press. Jesus entered Gethsemane feeling the weight of His future, much like the olives were crushed on the oil press by the weight of the beam. Our Scripture passage tells us what Jesus did when He felt that weight—He prayed. Let’s read about this time of prayer.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Say: “Jesus gave us many examples of how to pray and what to pray about. We read in the Bible about Him praying early in the morning and at night, with His disciples, alone, and in front of large crowds. There is no wrong time to pray if we follow Jesus’ example. Let’s read about a very important time of prayer that Jesus and some of His disciples experienced.”
- Have a volunteer read Matthew 26:36-39.
- Explain: “It says that Jesus and His disciples went to the garden in Gethsemane to pray, but then it says that He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee a little further. We read in Mark 3:17 that the sons are James and John. These three were Jesus’ closest friends, so He did what we all do with our close friends—He told them how He felt. He was very sad and distressed.”
- Explain that in verse 39, the cup Jesus referred to is the cross and death. He knew how hard the coming day would be.
- Ask for a volunteer to read verses 40-46
- Ask: “What did Peter, James, and John do twice while Jesus prayed?” (*Fell asleep*)
- Say: “Jesus asked twice that the cup pass from Him, but if not that God’s will be done.”
- Ask: “What is the cup Jesus mentions?” (*His death on the cross*)
- Explain: “Jesus was willing to obey God even though He knew it would be very hard. Let’s think about this in a small way. What if you broke a bone and it needed surgery to heal. You would probably be willing to do it, but you would not want to do it or look forward to it. Jesus was willing

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: Family Cards, “Olive Press” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles
- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack), pens, paper
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 26:39” (Poster Pack), pens, paper
- Prayer: “Timeline” (Poster Pack)

to go to the cross. When there are things in life that seem too hard, we can ask God to give us the strength to get through them and obey Him.”

THE BIBLE STORY

- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Option: This story is recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Form groups and assign each a different Connection Passage to read the story from. Ask them to record all the details that they find in the story in a timeline. Then begin the story and have the groups jump in and fill in the details to provide one complete story.
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and the “Connection Statement.”
- Say: “Let’s read our Text Truth together: **Jesus obeyed God’s plan to rescue us from sin.** We can be thankful that Jesus was willing to obey God even when it was very difficult. We can ask God to help us obey when it is difficult too.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 10” video.
- Ask: “Where did Joel visit? What did you learn about olive oil and olives? What did you learn about Jesus?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 26:39” poster.
- Say: “Let’s read our Memory Verse together.”
- Give out paper and pens and have kids write out the verse and then draw pictures under the keywords to illustrate it.

PRAYER

- Display the “Timeline.” Review the events on the timeline that kids have studied so far. Help kids place the events of the passion week in order.
- Say: “Life can be hard and during the hard times (*and the good times*), we should go to God in prayer like Jesus. Pray along as I pray, asking God to help you rely on Him in the hard times and the good times.”

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Lead girls and boys to locate today's pages in their Explorer Guides.
- Review today's object. Ask for volunteers to read about the "Mount of Olives & the Garden of Gethsemane."
- Invite kids to check out the "Sleep Facts." Encourage kids to think about how they would have acted if they had been a disciple in the garden.
- Review the Text Truth and ask kids to complete the activity "God's Will or My Will." Encourage kids to be honest in their answers.
- Read aloud the different types of prayers and guide kids to write their own prayer in the space provided.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask kids to share answers to previous prayer requests. Also let them share praises if time permits. Select a volunteer to close in prayer, thanking God for listening to our prayers.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

HOLDING HANDS IN PRAYER

Tools: scrapbook paper, magazines, scissors, glue, pencil

- Instruct kids to trace their hand onto scrapbook paper and then cut out pictures or words from magazines that represents things that they are praying for/about. Glue them onto the hand (*use both sides if needed*) and leave room to write their name on the hand.
- Take up the hands, mix them up and pass them back out, giving each kid someone else's hand.
- Say: "Take this hand home and be praying for the requests pictured on it. If one of your requests gets answered, let the person, who took your hand home to pray, know."
- Lead in prayer over hands and requests.
- Ask: "Why did Jesus pray during today's Bible story?" (*He prayed to God about the tough day ahead.*)
- Say: "Let's take some time to review today's Text Truth: **Jesus obeyed God's plan to rescue us from sin.**"



TEACHER SAYS GAME



Tools: prize for winner(s) (optional)

- Play the game Teacher Says (*just like Simon Says*). The last person standing is the winner. Repeat as time permits.
- Ask: “What did you have to do to win this game?” (*obey*) “Who did you have to obey?” (*the teacher*)
- Say: “There are many people that tell us what to do or try to influence how we act. Some of these people are doing this for our good and some do not have our best interest in mind. We can always trust that God has the best plan for us. We need to obey Him just as Jesus did and like our Text Truth said. Let’s say our Text Truth again: **Jesus obeyed God’s plan to rescue us from sin.** Our lives would be very different if Jesus had not obeyed God’s plan.”

DOTS AND SQUARES PRAYER



Tools: whiteboard, dry erase marker, “Review Questions” (enhanced CD)

- Draw a large dots game on the whiteboard (*a square made-up of rows of dots*) Allow kids to come take turns answering a review question. If they answer correctly, they can take a turn at connecting a dot to dot. Once a square has been formed, that player can draw or write a prayer request in the square. Continue playing as time permits. Use previous “Review Questions” if needed.
- Review the Text Truth: **Jesus obeyed God’s plan to rescue us from sin.**
- Close in prayer.
- Option: Draw more than one board and form smaller or multiple groups if you have a very large group of kids.



Session 11

PETER DENIED JESUS



Matthew 26:65-75

If we ever lose sight of what unwavering loyalty looks like we can always get a fresh vision of it when we take a long look at Jesus. In Him we observe unbending loyalty to our Father's plan of salvation. Following Jesus will be easy at times. However, at other times being loyal to Him may put us at risk. That's when our loyalty to Jesus will be put to the test.

Following Jesus' arrest, the disciples fled. Unwilling to stay awake with Jesus in prayer, they were unable to stand by Him in peril. Two of the disciples, John and Peter, followed from a distance and entered the courtyard of the high priest's palace (*John 18:15*).

None of the gospel accounts share Peter's thoughts as he waited to see what would happen to Jesus. Peter and John should be commended for going this far, since all the other disciples had fled. Peter had come this far despite his fear.

Notice the increasingly direct charge made toward Peter. The first was a statement by the slave girl to Peter. The second was a declaration about Peter to the people nearby. The third indictment was made by those standing there. John records that one of these third accusers was a relative of the servant who lost an ear to Peter's sword (*John 18:25-27*). The group had made up their mind. Peter was definitely one of the followers of Jesus.

Just as the charges became more direct and personal, Peter's denials intensified. The first time, Peter tried to deflect the girl's observation. The second time, he used an oath to deny the woman's remark. Finally, Peter began to curse and swear. As soon as Peter denied knowing Jesus a third time, a rooster crowed. Perhaps no one else noticed, but the sound froze Peter's heart. The guilt of failure fell on Peter and he went outside and wept bitterly.

As we remember the human failure of Peter and the other disciples, we must realize that even as a follower of Jesus did, we, too, sin and need the Savior, Jesus.

SESSION FOCUS

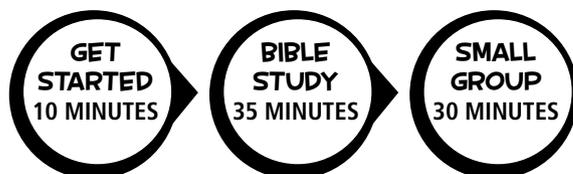
CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 26:65-75

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 26:31-35,69-75; Mark 14:66-72

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 26:64

ADDITIONAL MEMORY VERSE: Romans 3:23

TEXT TRUTH: Everyone (except Jesus!) is guilty of sin.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Muffin Mix-Up: “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), muffin mixes, pitchers of clean and dirty water, cooking utensils, oven

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: Family Cards, “Rooster Statue” (DVD-ROM)
- The Bible Story: Bibles, biblical times clothing (optional), recording of rooster crowing, lamps (optional), “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)

- Examine the Text:

Bibles

- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos

- Memory Verse: “Romans 3:23” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Prayer Time: pens and paper
- Examine: “Denial Questions” (enhanced CD), bag

- Move: painter’s tape, construction paper, marker

- Make: copies of “Bullseye Pattern” (enhanced CD), 5 felt pieces per kid, table tennis balls, permanent marker, hook and loop fasteners, ribbon, hot glue gun, scissors

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle.

Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle.

For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

PETER DENIED JESUS

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Matthew 26:31-35,69-75; Mark 14:66-72

When Jesus and the disciples arrived at the Mount of Olives, Jesus told the men, “Tonight all of you will run away because of Me. After I have been resurrected, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.”

Peter looked at Jesus and said, “Even if everyone else runs away, I will never run away from You!”

“I promise You, tonight, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times!” Jesus told Peter.

Peter insisted, “Even if I have to die with You, I will never deny You.” And the other disciples all agreed.

After Jesus was arrested and taken to the high priest, Peter was sitting outside. A servant said to Peter, “You were with Jesus the Galilean too.”

Peter denied it. “I don’t know what you are talking about,” he told everyone.

Peter walked to the gateway and another woman said: “This man was with Jesus the Nazarene!”

Again Peter denied it, saying “I don’t know the man!”

A little while later, the people standing there came to Peter. “You are one of them, your accent gives you away!” they said.

Peter replied, “I do not know the man!” At that moment, a rooster crowed and Peter remembered Jesus’ words. Peter left the area and cried.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Peter denied knowing and being with Jesus.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 26:65-75

- Peter thought he would never deny Jesus.
- We all sin.
- God always forgives us when we ask Him to.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Muffin Mix-Up: “Allergy Alert” (*enhanced CD*), muffin mixes, pitchers of clean and dirty water, cooking utensils, oven

OPTION:

- If allergies are a concern, don’t open the mix. Show the unopened package or a picture of muffin mix and adjust the discussion as needed.

MUFFIN MIX-UP

- Set up a table with muffin mix(es) (*use mixes that only require you add water*) and cooking utensils. Only have the pitcher filled with dirty water visible.
- Say: “I thought it would be fun to make some muffins to start off our morning together. Does everyone like muffins?”
- Empty the contents of the muffin mix into a bowl.
- Continue: “Now all I have to do is add water. I want to use some water that I found outside in nature and thought this would work great.”
- Hold up the pitcher where kids can see it. Let them react/respond.
- Say: “I think that all of the flavor in the muffin mix will cover up any of the taste of dirt from this water, especially once they are baked, don’t you?”
- Ask: “Why do you not think it is a good idea for me to use this water?” Allow for answers.
- Ask: “So what you are saying is that even though I have a lot of good tasting muffin mix, if I add this dirty water, the whole batch of muffins will be ruined?”
- Continue: “Well, I suppose you are right. No one would want to eat muffins made with this dirty water, no matter how many good ingredients are in them. That is kind of like our lives compared to Jesus! We show Him all the good things we have done and yet we know that we have sin in our lives. It does not matter how many good or even great things we do, because the presence of sin makes all of our good things look like dirty old rags to Jesus. Sin gets into every part of our lives, just like this water would have seeped into every part of those muffins and all of the muffins would have been affected, not just one. Sin entered the world through a man, Adam, but we all have sinned, not just Adam. And sin can be forgiven and removed by one man, Jesus, because He is the only person to walk this earth and not sin. The memory verse that we will learn later is Romans 3:23 and it reveals that we have all sinned and fallen short of God’s glory.”
- Transition: “I’m going to add this good, clean water to the muffin mix and get them in the oven. Then let’s talk more about our sin and our Savior.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Give high fives to kids as they come to their seats.
- Ask: “So, is everyone relieved that we used the clean water to make the muffins instead of the dirty water? It would be great if we realized how sin can mess things up before we let it enter our lives. The wonderful news is that even though we sin, God still forgives us. Our object today has to do with an individual that sinned and probably felt his sin was unforgivable.”
- Display the “Rooster Statue” visual and ask if anyone can guess what the story is about from looking at the object.
- Say: “Yes, that is right. Today’s object is a rooster statue and it reminds us of the story about Peter denying Jesus three times before the rooster crowed, just as Jesus said he would.”
- Distribute Family Cards. Display the “Rooster Statue” visual.
- Continue: “This would be a great card to display somewhere that you will see everyday. It can be a reminder that even when you sin and feel that no one will forgive you, God will forgive you and love you, just as He did Peter.”

THE BIBLE STORY

- This is a great Bible story to act out. Consider using biblical times clothing if they are available. Play the sound of a rooster crowing. You can dim the lights in the room or use lamps to light the room. A Bible story script has been provided for you for reference.
- Begin by setting the scene: “Last week our Bible story ended with Jesus in Gethsemane. Right before this, Jesus told the disciples that after He was betrayed, they would all leave Him. This is where our story picks up today.”
- Have kids act out the story and you provide narration when needed.
- Say: “This story gives us one more example of how everyone has sinned except Jesus. That is what our Text Truth says. Let’s read it together: **Everyone (except Jesus!) is guilty of sin.** The good news for us, just like Peter, is that even though we all sin, God always forgives us when we ask Him.”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and the “Connection Statement.” Review both statements.

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Say: “Let’s look closely at the verses that describe Peter’s denial.”
- Ask someone to read Matthew 26:69-75.
- Ask: “Who were the three people or groups that confronted Jesus about Peter?” (*a servant girl, a woman, and a group of bystanders*)
- Say: “We are not told if Peter had reason to be scared of these individuals, but it is hard to believe that a fisherman would be scared of a servant girl.

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: Family Cards, “Rooster Statue” (DVD-ROM)
- The Bible Story: Bibles, biblical times clothing (*optional*), recording of rooster crowing, lamps (*optional*), “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (*Poster Pack*)
- Examine the Text: Bibles
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Romans 3:23” (*Poster Pack*)

Peter realized immediately what he had done when he heard the rooster crow and was sad.”

- Explain: “We have all made promises thinking that we would follow through with them. Then we get scared, we fail to keep the promise, and then we have regret and sadness. Scripture says Peter wept bitterly. Have you ever cried over something you have done that hurt someone else? Imagine if the person you hurt was Jesus. Peter probably felt that he could never be forgiven for what he did. But Jesus would go to the cross so that Peter and all of us could experience His forgiveness!”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 11” video.
- Ask: “What did Kaileigh share about Peter? Did Peter struggle to be loyal? Do you ever struggle to be loyal to Jesus?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Romans 3:23” poster.
- Say: “Let’s read our Memory Verse together.”
- Continue: “This is a verse that you may already be familiar with, so let’s talk about what it means.”
- Ask questions about the verse and then have them say it a few more times together.

PRAYER

- Say: “Let’s talk to God now and ask Him to help us when we are tempted to deny Him.”
- Lead in prayer or have another teacher pray.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids find today's pages.
- Invite volunteers to read aloud the facts in "Did You Know?" Guide kids to examine the object and read silently the information about it.
- Invite kids to read Peter's three replies from today's Bible story.
- Help kids say today's "Word to Know" and review how that word was used in today's Bible study.
- Ask a volunteer to read "Who was Peter?"
- Direct kids to use their Bibles to complete the activities, "Following Jesus" and "Think About It."

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

PRAYER TIME

- Distribute pens and paper. Ask kids to write down a praise, a sin to confess, a request, and something to thank God for. Have them pray by themselves about the things they wrote down. Close the time of prayer by ending with a sentence prayer.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Prayer Time: pens and paper



DENIAL DISCUSSION

Tools: "Denial Questions" (enhanced CD), bag

- Print the "Denial Questions," cut them apart, and put them in a bag.

- Let kids take turns drawing out a question and asking it to the rest of the class.
- Say: "You gave some great answers and insight to these questions about Peter's denial. It is easy to blame Peter and think we would have done things differently. Let's remember what our Text Truth says: **Everyone (except Jesus!) is guilty of sin.**"

MEMORY VERSE HOPSCOTCH



Tools: painter's tape, construction paper, marker

- Create a hopscotch grid out of painter's tape on the floor. Write out words of the Memory Verse on pieces of construction paper (8 pieces) and place them in the hopscotch squares, one piece of paper in each square. Cover the Memory Verse poster.
- Say: "Today we are playing Memory Verse Hopscotch. Each of you will take a turn hopping, while the rest of us say the verse. When we finish saying the verse, stop hopping. Whatever word(s) you land on will be taken away for the next round."
- If you have time, play again using the Text Truth: **Everyone (except Jesus!) is guilty of sin.**

BULLSEYE!



Tools: copies of "Bullseye Pattern" (enhanced CD), 5 felt pieces per kid, table tennis balls, permanent marker, hook and loop fasteners, ribbon, hot glue gun, scissors

- Give each kid 5 pieces of different colored felt. Instruct them to leave one piece a rectangle. Then have them trace the "Bullseye Pattern" onto three of the pieces of felt. The kids should cut the last piece of felt into small squares and then write the scoring numbers on them (1, 1, 5, 5, 10). Use the hook and loop fasteners to affix the pieces of the bullseye together and the numbers to the different sections. Cover the table tennis ball in hook and loop fasteners too. Glue the ribbon for each kid to the back of the bullseye for hanging.
- Say: "This is a fun game that you can play at home! It can also be used to remind you of today's Memory Verse, because we have all missed the bullseye or mark because of sin. Let's review our Memory Verse now."
- Review the Text Truth again: **Everyone (except Jesus!) is guilty of sin.**



Session 12



BREAKFAST WITH THE DISCIPLES

Matthew 27:41-52*

Peter and other disciples left the mountain where Jesus had directed them to wait for Him. They returned to the fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee. Perhaps they did not anticipate Jesus giving them a new, larger task. Peter's decision to go fishing did not seem to be a mere recreational activity. Maybe he thought it was time to go back to the old ways. After all, Jesus had risen from the grave. Peter and the rest of the disciples likely believed Jesus would use this power to fulfill their idea of the Messiah's purpose and restore the kingdom to Israel (*Acts 1:6*). The disciples might not be needed.

The fact that Peter and several others of the group decided to go fishing as they waited on Jesus means they likely were near the place where Peter's father's boats were located. This seashore could have been where Peter, Andrew, James, and John had worked as professional fishermen when Jesus called them (*Matt. 4:18-22*).

The text recounts that Peter's group fished all night but caught nothing. As the morning dawned, the resurrected Christ stood on the shore and gave direction on how to catch fish. Following the miraculous haul, Peter dove into the water to get to Jesus quicker.

Jesus replicated the scene of Peter's original call (*Luke 5:1-11*). The disciples needed to understand that their purpose in life had not changed. Jesus wanted Peter, especially, to know his temporary weakness and denial of Christ had not disqualified him from Jesus' calling. Jesus still wanted Peter to be a fisher of men and a shepherd of the Lord's flock.

Perhaps Peter still stung from the shame and embarrassment of the denial during Jesus' trial. Now, however, Jesus graciously restored Peter, and Peter had a chance to confirm that he did indeed love the Lord and was willing to go where he needed to go. Just as Christ's death on the cross covered Peter's sin, it does the same for all who are willing to repent and have faith in Him.

SESSION FOCUS

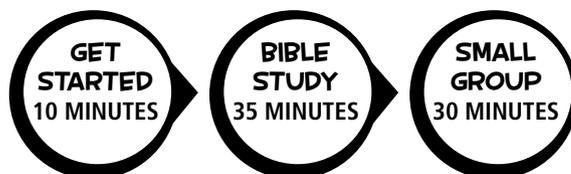
CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 27:41-52*

CONNECTION PASSAGE: John 21:1-19

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 27:54

ADDITIONAL MEMORY VERSE: John 3:16

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus' redemption covers all of our sin.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Application Review: *Family Cards, Explorer Guides, "Text Truth Strips" (Poster Pack)*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: *postcards, Family Cards, "Tabgha Beach" (DVD-ROM)*
- Examine the Text: *Bibles*
- The Bible Story: *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements" (Poster Pack)*

- Play the Video: *Explore the Bible on Location videos*

- Memory Verse: *"John 3:16" (Poster Pack)*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Make: *small brown paper lunch sacks, microwave popcorn (unpopped), candy bars, markers, "Sheep Cut-Outs" (enhanced CD), hole punch, ribbon or yarn*

- Move: *"Allergy Alert" and "Review Questions" (enhanced CD), nets, balloons, small prizes (option)*

- Examine: *heavyweight paper, painter's tape, black permanent markers, watercolor paint, paint brushes, paint smocks, tablecloths*

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*Older Kids will focus on the Connection Passage today.

JESUS ATE WITH THE DISCIPLES

CONNECTION PASSAGE: John 21:1-19

Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John, and two more disciples decided to go fishing on the Sea of Tiberias. They went out and fished during the night, but they didn't catch anything. In the morning, Jesus stood on the shore of the lake, but the disciples didn't know it was Jesus.

Jesus called to the men, "You don't have any fish, do you?"

"No," the men answered.

"Cast the net on the right side of the boat and you will find some," He told them. They did and they could not haul the net into the boat because it was so full of fish. The disciple, the one Jesus loved, told Peter, "It is the Lord!"

When the disciples got to the shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish and bread. "Bring some of the fish you caught," Jesus told them.

The disciples pulled the net ashore. They had caught 153 fish. Jesus invited the men to have breakfast. This was the third time Jesus had appeared to the disciples after His resurrection.

After they had eaten, Jesus asked Peter, "Peter, do you love Me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord. You know I love You." Peter responded.

"Feed My lambs." Jesus told him.

Jesus asked Peter, "Simon, do you love Me?"

Peter said, "Yes, Lord. You know I love You."

"Shepherd My sheep," Jesus said.

For a third time, Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love Me?"

Peter was deeply sad that Jesus asked Him this for a third time. "Lord, You know everything and You know that I love You." Peter responded.

"Feed My sheep." Jesus told him.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God's people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Jesus forgave Peter and told him to lead and teach Jesus' followers.



KEY CONNECTIONS

CORE PASSAGE:

Matthew 27:41-52*

- Jesus was not mad at Peter for messing up.
- Jesus asked Peter to take care of Jesus' followers.
- Peter obeyed Jesus. Everywhere he went, he told people about Jesus.
- Peter was an important leader in the early church.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Application Review: Family Cards, Explorer Guides, “Text Truth Strips” (*Poster Pack*)

APPLICATION REVIEW

- Say: “We have had a great journey through the second half of the Book of Matthew. Our journey has taken us to many different locations, revealed many different truths, and introduced us to many different Bible people. Let’s take some time now to remember these stories, truths, and people and share what we learned from them.”
- Reference the previous eleven Bible stories. Utilize the Family Cards, “Text Truth Strips,” Memory Verses, and Explorer Guides. Be prepared to share and get the discussion going. Ask specific questions that will reveal how they might have applied what they learned.
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Prior to class, gather two or three postcards that show locations of places you have visited.
- Say: “Raise your hand if something awesome happened this week.” Let some of the kids share what happened.
- Continue: “I love starting off our Bible study time together hearing about all of the great things happening in your lives. Today’s Bible story picks up after Jesus’ resurrection—that was a pretty awesome event back then and now!”
- Display the postcards or pass them around.
- Share: “Whenever you go on vacation, many of the tourist shops will have postcards with pictures and information about the place you are visiting. These are great to help you remember where you have been. They also help you remember what you experienced at these locations.”
- Distribute Family Cards. Display the “Tabgha Beach” visual.
- Say: “This beach is on the Sea of Tiberias, which is also called the Sea of Galilee. We do not have pictures of Jesus and His disciples at the locations we read about. We do, however, have pictures of those locations and we can picture Jesus and His followers there and imagine what took place during today’s Bible story.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Guide kids to open their Bibles to John 21:1-14.
- Ask: “How many of you like to fish? Have any of you ever been fishing on a boat? What is the most fish that you have ever caught?” Allow for kids to respond.
- Say: “That’s a good number of fish and I bet they tasted great! Today’s story is a fishing story. You know people usually exaggerate about the size of the fish they catch or the number of fish that they catch. We know that today’s fishing story is true though, because it is in God’s Word!”
- Ask for a volunteer to read verses 1-8.
- Say: “This story does not start out so well. Peter and some other disciples go fishing, but they do not catch anything.”
- Ask: “Who speaks to them from the shore?” (*Jesus*) “Do they recognize Him?” (*No*) “What did He tell them to do?” (*Cast the net on the right side of the boat and they would catch fish*)
- Share: “Sometimes when we feel like God is telling us to do something, we are probably tempted to ask why or remind Him that we have tried before and it did not work. The disciples were probably thinking these things too, but they obeyed and were rewarded with 153 fish for their obedience. It was then that John realized Jesus was the one talking to them. Peter threw himself into the sea and swam to Jesus.”
- Ask: “Why do you think Peter was so excited to see Jesus?” (*He still felt bad for denying Jesus and was glad to see Jesus still cared and was not mad.*)

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: postcards, Family Cards, “Tabgha Beach” (*DVD-ROM*)
- Examine the Text: Bibles
- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (*Poster Pack*)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “John 3:16” (*Poster Pack*)

DEFINITION:

- Redeem: To pay a price in order to get something back from someone else.

- Ask someone to read verses 9-14.
- Say: “I bet this was the best breakfast on the beach that the disciples ever had. They had been with Jesus after His resurrection and continued to witness His amazing ways. Let’s hear the rest of today’s story now.”

THE BIBLE STORY

- Tell the rest of the Bible story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Say: “Three times Peter denied Jesus, and three times Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him.”
- Ask someone to read John 21:17.
- Explain: “It says that Peter was sad that Jesus asked Him three times. But Jesus also gave Peter a very important job—to feed His sheep or to take care of His people. This is proof of Jesus’ forgiveness! He not only forgave Peter, He also trusted him to take care of others.”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and “Connection Statement.” Ask a volunteer to read aloud each statement.
- Share: “Today’s Text Truth says: **Jesus’ redemption covers all of our sin.** It does not matter what you have done, Jesus will forgive you and save you if you repent and trust Him. I imagine Peter was convinced of this after this experience and was able to share his story of being forgiven with others. You can share your story too!”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 12” video.
- Ask: “Who wants to try Joel’s cooking now? What did Jesus and Peter talk about on the beach?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “John 3:16” poster.
- Say: “Many of you may be familiar with this verse, but let’s read it together for those who are not.”
- Break the verse down into sections and ask for volunteers to share what each section means. Then say it together again as a group. Encourage them to think about the meaning as they say it.

PRAYER

- Close in prayer using John 3:16 as an outline for your prayer. (*Dear Jesus, Thank you that you loved the whole world so much that you sent your Son to save it ...*)

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Guide girls and boys to locate today's pages in the Explorer Guide.
- Invite kids to look at the information about breakfast in Bible times and to think about the types of breakfast eaten today.
- Review the object and help kids use their Bibles to finish the "Bible Story Review." Lead kids to read today's "Word to Know."
- Ask a volunteer to read "What Did Peter Do?" and discuss how Peter followed the mission Jesus gave him.
- Help kids think about how to tell others about Jesus as they complete the activity "In Your Own Words."

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask kids to pray with a partner, thanking God for sending His Son and praying for their requests.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.



THANK EWE

Tools: small brown paper lunch sacks, microwave popcorn (unpopped), candy bars, markers, "Sheep Cut-Outs" (enhanced CD), hole punch, ribbon or yarn

- Before class print and copy the sheep and cut them out.

- **Review the Text Truth: Jesus' redemption covers all of our sin.**
- **Begin:** "Today we are going to make thank you gifts for the leaders at our church. Jesus told Peter to feed His sheep, and that is what our church leaders do every day!"
- **Make a list of the leaders (paid and volunteer) in your church that you will give a thank you gift to and assign a kid(s) to each leader. Give everyone a paper lunch sack, bag of microwave popcorn, a candy bar, and a "Sheep Cut-Out."** Instruct them to write *Thank Ewe For Feeding His Sheep* on the paper bag and fill it with the popcorn and a candy bar. Then have them write a thank you note on the "Sheep Cut-Outs," punch two holes in the top and corresponding holes in the top of the bag. Use ribbon or yarn to tie the sheep to the bag to close it.
- Close with a discussion about how kids can feed God's sheep too.

BEACH BREAKFAST RELAY



Tools: “Allergy Alert” and “Review Questions” (enhanced CD), nets, balloons, small prizes (optional)

- Before class blow up balloons, enough to overfill the nets when scooped up. Place the balloons (fish) on the opposite side of room from the nets.
- Form two teams and give instructions: “At my signal, two kids from each team will run with your nets to the sea area where the fish (balloons) are and try to scoop as many fish into the nets as possible in 10 seconds and then run back to your team.”
- Continue playing until everyone has been a “fisherman.” Have the teams count their balloons, giving the teams 1 point per balloon. Then take turns asking each team a “Review Question” and give each team 1 point for every question answered correctly. (Option: Give the winning team a small prize.)
- Say: “Let’s review our Text Truth again: **Jesus’ redemption covers all of our sin.**”

SIN REMOVER



Tools: heavyweight paper, painter’s tape, black permanent markers, watercolor paint, paint brushes, paint smocks, tablecloths

- Give each kid a piece of heavyweight paper. Invite kids to create designs on their paper using the painter’s tape.
- Pass out permanent markers and ask the boys and girls to write sins that kids their age might struggle with on the painter’s tape. Remind them that they are using permanent ink and to be careful.
- Invite kids to paint their papers. Challenge them to also paint over the sins they wrote on the tape.
- Discuss: “Did painting over the sins change anything? Is the sin still written there? Can you still see it?”
- Guide kids to slowly remove the painter’s tape from their papers.
- Say: “What happened to those sins? They were removed. Sometimes it feels as if our sin is permanently in our life, and like there is no way to get rid of it. But Jesus provided a way to have our sins removed. Through the shedding of His blood on the cross, our sins are redeemed if we repent and trust in Him.”
- Say: “Every sin is wiped away by Jesus’ work on the cross. Let’s say our Text Truth one more time: **Jesus’ redemption covers all of our sin.**”

Option: You may use other colors of permanent markers to color the paper and tape instead of paint.



Session 13



THE GREAT COMMISSION

Matthew 28:16-20

Too often we see the Great Commission merely as something we are supposed to do—a task to check off from our to-do list. Christ's Commission is not about duty but delight, not about a project but a Person. This week's study helps us see the focus is not merely on the activity of making disciples, but on the Person of the discipler—Jesus. We are not just disciples; we are Jesus' disciples. Our joy is to introduce people to Jesus, Who can save people and transform their lives with purpose and power.

Jesus died on the cross, was buried, and rose on the third day. This simple statement declares the heart of the gospel (*1 Cor. 15:3-4*). The passion of Christ as He endured the cross surpasses the most eloquent proclamation. The silence of the tomb gave way after three days to the power of God in Christ's resurrection (*Rom. 1:4*). Still, this was just the beginning of the story.

When the disciples saw Jesus, they understood He truly was the Messiah. He had risen from the dead and stood before them in Jerusalem. When Jesus met the disciples in Galilee that day, they recognized His identity as the Son of God and worshiped Him. This fact is significant because only God is worthy of worship (*Matt. 4:10*). Since Jesus received worship, He clearly was God the Son, not merely a prophet, teacher, or healer.

Jesus finished His task on earth and committed the good news of salvation to His disciples and through them, to us today. As He prepared to return to heaven, Jesus commissioned His followers to carry the gospel to all the people of the earth, making disciples wherever they went.

Our mission to the world takes place in the context of Jesus' majesty. Witnessing and making disciples are not ends in themselves; they involve glorifying Christ.

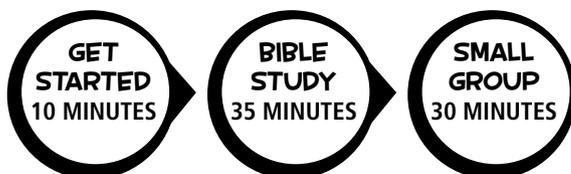
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: Matthew 28:16-20

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:6-8

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 28:19-20

TEXT TRUTH: Go everywhere and tell everyone the good news of Jesus.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Missions Matter:**
missionary speaker or stories/videos from www.imb.org or www.namb.net

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In:** *Family Cards, globe, "Madaba Map" (DVD-ROM), music*
- Examine the Text:**
Bibles
- The Bible Story:** *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements" (Poster Pack)*

- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location videos*

- Memory Verse:**
"Matthew 28:19-20" (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move:** *numbered cube, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)*

- Make:** *small picture frames (approximately 3.5-by-5-inches), paper maps, scissors, decoupage glue, sponge paint brushes, markers*

- Examine:** *"Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), 128 pieces of individually wrapped candy, paper bag*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

JESUS GAVE A MISSION

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:6-8

After His death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to His followers many times. For 40 days Jesus appeared to His followers and taught them about the kingdom of God.

Jesus told His followers, “Everything written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must come true.”

Then Jesus began to explain the Scriptures to His followers. He also reminded them that the Scriptures had promised that “The Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day. Repentance and forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, starting with the city of Jerusalem.”

Jesus told His followers, “You are witnesses of my life, death, and resurrection. Look, I am sending you what My Father promised. You will stay in the city of Jerusalem until you are given power from God.” The power from God was the Holy Spirit.

Jesus’ followers thought that this might be the time that God was going to rescue Israel from the Romans and make them a new kingdom again. Jesus explained that God is the one who decides when things happen. Jesus had a more important mission for His followers that He was finally ready to tell them about.

Before He returned to heaven, Jesus gave His followers a special mission, one that they would spend the rest of their lives obeying. After the Holy Spirit came, the disciples would receive power to go and tell people in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth all about Jesus. Jesus’ followers were instructed to go all over the world and tell other people about Jesus—about His death and resurrection and about how people could receive forgiveness for their sin. This special mission is given to all of Jesus’ followers, even today!

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Jesus commanded His followers to spread the news about Him across the world.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO MATTHEW

CORE PASSAGE:

Matthew 28:16-20

- We are to go and tell others about Jesus!
- The mission Jesus had for His disciples was bigger than they could have imagined.
- There are people in our world who still haven’t heard the good news about Jesus.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Missions Matter: missionary speaker or stories/videos from www.imb.org or www.namb.net

OPTION:

Use a story from a missionary your church supports.

MISSIONS MATTER

- Invite a missionary (*home or international*) to share a testimony about their work with the class. If a missionary is not accessible to you, find stories or videos from the International Mission Board at www.imb.org or the North America Mission Board at www.namb.net.
- Say: “It is always powerful to hear how God is working in other places with other people. Our Bible study today is going to focus on some of the final words Jesus spoke to His followers before ascending back to heaven. They reveal that our purpose is to share the good news about Jesus.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Play or sing a song about sharing the good news while kids are finding seats.
- Distribute Family Cards. Display the “Madaba Map” visual.
- Ask: “Does this map look like any map you would use today?” Allow for responses.
- Say: “It is very detailed as it is a mosaic made up of 750,000 tiny cubes! It is not only detailed, it is very old—about 1500 years old.”
- Say: “Our story today is about how we are to tell the good news of Jesus to those that live closest to us on a map and those that live the farthest away. Let’s look at this globe and see all the places that we need to take the gospel.”
- Let kids take turns coming up to the globe and finding a country. Have them announce the name and then everyone say, “Go to _____ (country name) and tell the good news!”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Have kids open their Bibles to Matthew 28:16-20.
- Say: “This is our last week in the Book of Matthew! It has been an exciting journey and in today’s passage, the disciples are given some very special instructions. Guess what? These instructions apply to us that are believers too!”
- Ask a volunteer to read verses 16-20.
- Say: “It says that some of the disciples worshiped Jesus and some of them still doubted who He was. What did Jesus do to confirm His identity?” (*Said that all authority in heaven and earth had been given to Him.*)
- Ask: “Who knows what this passage is usually called?” (*The Great Commission*)
- Share: “A commission is an instruction or command. What were Jesus’ special instructions?” (*Go to all nations and make disciples.*)
- Say: “That is a big task, and it seems almost impossible. We know though, from our time in Matthew that with God, all things are possible. Let’s read more about what happened before Jesus returned to heaven.”

THE BIBLE STORY

- Have kids turn to Luke 24:44-49 and ask for a volunteer to read these verses.
- Ask: “Have you ever heard your teacher explain something in school but not really understood it? The disciples experienced this with Jesus. Before the cross, He told them many times what would happen. They could not understand it though. Then after He arose, He reminded them of what He had already told them. In the Book of Acts, we read that Jesus talked to the disciples some more.”
- Share: “Before your parents go on a trip they probably have lots of

TOOLS:

- Jumping In: Family Cards, globe, “Madaba Map” (DVD-ROM), music
- Examine the Text: Bibles
- The Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location videos
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 28:19-20” (Poster Pack)

OPTION:

- You may choose to use the “Timeline” and “Passion Week Map” in the Poster Pack to review previous Bible studies as you conclude your study of the Book of Matthew.

instructions for you. They tell you what to do and what not to do. They also have someone stay with you to help you do what they have instructed you to do. Before Jesus went back to heaven, He gave His followers many instructions. I am sure that the disciples were nervous, sad, and scared about Jesus leaving. But He also promised them a helper, the Holy Spirit, to help them carry out His instructions.”

- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and the “Connection Statement.” Invite a volunteer to read aloud each statement.
- Say: “Let’s read today’s Text Truth together: **Go everywhere and tell everyone the good news of Jesus.** We are told to do the same thing that the disciples were told! We also have the Holy Spirit to help us. There are people in our world that still have not heard the good news of Jesus. We need to continue praying, going, and sharing!”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 13” video.
- Ask: “Who did Joel tell us about today? How did Billy Graham follow the Great Commission? How can you obey the Great Commission and tell others about Jesus?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 28:19-20” poster.
- Say: “Let’s read our Memory Verse together.”
- Ask kids to come up with actions to go with the key words in the verse. Then have a volunteer do the actions in front of the group, while the group says the verse.

PRAYER

- Ask kids to pray for the missionary that spoke (*or those on video or in stories*) and the work that they are doing.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids find today's pages.
- Review the Text Truth and ask a volunteer to read aloud about today's object, the Madaba Map, in "Mosaic Map."
- Help boys and girls review today's "Word to Know."
- Invite kids to take turns reading about languages in the world today.
- Emphasize the importance of telling others about Jesus. Guide kids to complete the "My Great Commission" activity. Then help them complete "What Do I Tell About Jesus?"

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

PRAYER TIME

- Have kids name different states and countries and then pray specifically for the people that live there to hear the gospel.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

REVIEW ROLL



Tools: numbered cube, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)

- Print the "Review Questions" from lessons 1-13 and cut apart. Place the questions all around the room.

- **Pair the kids up and begin the game!**
- **Say:** "Today we are going to review all of the Bible stories we have covered in the second half of Matthew. The review questions are scattered around the room. When you find a question and figure out the answer, come tell me, and if it is correct you get a chance to roll the numbered cube. The number you roll will be the amount of points you receive. Keep playing until all of the questions have been answered. The pair with the most points at the end, wins."
- **Conclude:** "That was a great review of all we have learned. Great job! Let's review one more thing, our Text Truth: **Go everywhere and tell everyone the good news of Jesus.**"

GO PICTURE FRAME



Tools: small picture frames (approximately 3.5-by-5-inches), paper maps, scissors, decoupage glue, sponge paint brushes, markers

Before class, remove glass and paper photos from frames. Keep the paper photos for writing on.

- Give kids the paper photos and have them use markers to write the words **GO** in capital letters and *Matthew 28:19-20* underneath on the back side. Another option is to write the whole verse under **GO** or the Text Truth. Encourage them to be creative with their lettering and colors. Let kids tear the maps into various size strips. Instruct them to put a layer of decoupage glue on a section of the frame and then a strip of map and cover with decoupage glue again. They should continue this process until their frame is covered. Allow the frames to dry before putting paper photos and glass back in them.
- Say: "This will be a great reminder each day that you are on the mission field all of the time! In your home and outside your home you can share the gospel, just like our Text Truth says. Let's say it together again: **Go everywhere and tell everyone the good news of Jesus.**"

GOOD NEWS MULTIPLICATION



Tools: "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), 128 pieces of individually wrapped candy, paper bag

- The purpose of this object lesson is to show how quickly the good news multiplies when we follow the Great Commission.
- Say: "In Matthew 28, Jesus said to go and tell everyone about the good news. In the Book of Romans, we are asked how others will believe in someone they have never heard about. So it is clear that as a Christian, our job is to go and tell others the good news of the gospel. Let's see how quickly our class would grow if we did some good news multiplication!"
- Take one piece of candy out of the bag and relate how the candy is one kid from their class. Then explain what would happen if after church, this kid told a friend the good news and asked him to come to church with him to hear more about the good news the next week. Then take another piece of candy out and set it by the first piece and describe what happens when these two kids leave church and each share the good news with another friend and ask those friends to come with them to church to hear more about the gospel.
- Continue the lesson, multiplying the candy until you reach 64 pieces. Then pour out the rest of the candy since doubling 64 equals 128 pieces.
- Say: "In just 8 weeks our class would go from 1 to 128 kids!" (*Give each kid 2 pieces of candy and tell them to enjoy one and share a piece and the good news with a friend.*)
- Review the Text Truth: **Go everywhere and tell everyone the good news of Jesus.**

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Each of these terms will help you as you delve into teaching *Explore the Bible: Kids*.

- **CORE PASSAGE**

The focal passage for all age groups.

- **TEXT TRUTH**

The main point of the Core Passage to communicate to children.

- **CONNECTION PASSAGE**

Related Scripture and story that connects to the Text Truth and Core Passage.

- **CONNECTION STATEMENT**

A statement connecting the Core and Connection Passages.

- **CHRIST IN CONTEXT**

The message of Jesus in a particular Bible book.

- **GENRE**

A specific form or type of writing or literature. Each form has rules or basic features. In the Bible, there are six genres: Law, History, Poetry and Wisdom, Prophecy, Gospel, and Letters.

- **CONTEXT**

The words or environment around what you are studying that help you understand what it means. Examples of types of context: historical context, cultural context.

- **ORIGINAL AUDIENCE**

The author of each Bible book wrote to a specific audience. The original audience is the first audience to receive the Bible book. All other readers, including today's readers, are not the original audience. The original audience is key to understanding the author's purpose for the Bible book or text.

- **CROSS-REFERENCING**

Examining a second (*third, fourth, and etc.*) biblical text to gain greater understanding of the first biblical text.

COMING NEXT QUARTER

SUMMER 2017

PSALM - The Book of Psalms is known as the song book of the Bible. The 150 psalms listed cover a wide variety of genres and themes. The kids will study three genres: psalms of hope, psalms of praise, and psalms of righteousness.

DATE	CORE PASSAGE	CONNECTION PASSAGE	MEMORY VERSE
June 4	Psalm 1:1-6	Numbers 13-14	Psalm 1:6
June 11	Psalm 78:5-8,32-39	Exodus 1-40	Psalm 78:35
June 18	Psalm 23:1-6	John 10:1-21	Psalm 23:1
June 25	Psalm 138:1-8	Luke 17:11-19	Psalm 138:1
July 2	Psalm 84:1-12	1 Kings 5-8	Psalm 84:12
July 9	Psalm 95:1-11	Genesis 1-2	Psalm 95:6
July 16	Psalm 19:1-14	Matthew 1:20-23; Luke 2:41-50, 4:16-30, 10:21-24; John 1:1-5, 12:44-50, 14:7-11	Psalm 19:1
July 23	Psalm 136:1-5,10-15, 23-26	Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-56; 2:1-39	Psalm 136:1
July 30	Psalm 146:1-10	1 Kings 17:1-16	Psalm 146:6
Aug. 6	Psalm 51:1-17	2 Samuel 12:1-15	Psalm 51:10
Aug. 13	Psalm 32:1-11	Luke 7:36-50	Psalm 32:11
Aug. 20	Psalm 141:1-10	Daniel 3	Psalm 141:8
Aug. 27	Psalm 42:1-11	Job 1-42	Psalm 42:8

TOOLS FOR DIGGING DEEP!

OLDER KIDS TOOL KIT

The resources you need to lead one class:

- One Older Kids Leader Guide
- One Older Kids Explorer Guide
- One pack Older Kids Family Cards
- One Older Kids Poster Pack
- One Kids Enhanced CD
- One Kids DVD

OLDER KIDS LEADER GUIDE

Helps older kids connect the Bible to present day

- Leader-friendly session plans for small- and large-group learning
- Activities to encourage kids to dig, explore, and discover the Bible

OLDER KIDS EXPLORER GUIDE

Engage older kids Explorer Plus with a colorful, fact-filled magazine.

- Identifies each object that reminds kids of the Bible story and Text Truth
- Weekly pages with colorful illustrations, info-graphics, and photos
- Fun-to-do Bible-focused activities relate to the Bible content and application
- Send home at the end of the quarter for kids to keep

OLDER KIDS POSTER PACK

Filled with leader-friendly resources that make teaching easy

- Christ in Context poster(s)
- Text Truth statements
- Family Memory Verse posters (*ESV, CSB, KJV, NIV*)
- Additional visual aids and resources

OLDER KIDS FAMILY CARDS

- Equip parents with discussion questions that relate to each session

KIDS ENHANCED CD

- Bible-related music
- Printable teacher tools and session helps

KIDS DVD

- Includes a video for each session to help kids connect the biblical text in the cultural and historical context of the session

KIDS TOOL KIT WITH WORSHIP

- Second-hour option
- Kid-friendly worship experience that reinforces every weekly session



THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation.



GOD RULES. The Bible tells us God created everything, including you and me, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to recite Genesis 1:1 from memory or read it from his Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 and Colossians 1:16-17.



WE SINNED. Since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God’s punishment of death (Romans 6:23).



GOD PROVIDED. Read John 3:16 aloud. God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It’s something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read Ephesians 2:8-9.



JESUS GIVES. Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God’s family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



WE RESPOND. We can respond to Jesus. “The ABCs of Becoming a Christian” is a simple tool that helps us remember how to respond when prompted by the Holy Spirit to the gift Jesus offers.

ADMIT

Admit to God that you are a sinner. The first people God created chose to sin and disobey God. Ever since then, all people have chosen to sin and disobey (Romans 3:23). Tell God you messed up and you are sorry for doing your own thing and turning away from Him through your thoughts, words, and actions. Repent, turn away from your sin. (Acts 3:19; 1 John 1:9) *Repent* doesn’t just mean turning from doing bad things to doing good things. It means turning from sin and even from your own good works and turning to Jesus, trusting only in Him to save you.

BELIEVE

Believe that Jesus is God’s Son and receive God’s gift of forgiveness from sin. You must believe that only Jesus can save you and you cannot save yourself from your sin problem—not even by praying to God, going to church, or reading your Bible. Your faith or your trust is only in Jesus and what He did for you through His life, death, and resurrection. (Acts 16:31; Acts 4:12; John 14:6; Ephesians 2:8-9)

CONFESS

Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Tell God and tell others what you believe. If Jesus is your Savior, you are trusting only in Him to save you. Jesus is also Lord, which means He is in charge and calling the shots in your life. You can start following Him and doing what He says in the Bible. You are born again into a new life and look forward to being with God forever. (Romans 10:9-10,13)

HELP PARENTS LEAD DISCIPLESHIP WITH **FAMILY CARDS!**

PARENTS CAN MAKE TIME TO DISCIPLE THEIR KIDS:

During a weekly trip for ice cream

On the way to school in the morning

At their bedsides just before bedtime

En route to soccer or dance practice after school

After everyone has a full belly from dinnertime



Family Cards equip parents for spiritual conversations throughout the week at home. Cards include the memory verse reference and object of the week to reinforce learning.

Equip parents today!

Order Family Cards at lifeway.com/explorethebible or
1.800.458.2772.

Prices and availability subject to change without notice.



EXPLORE THE BIBLE

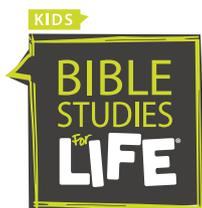
Book-by-book studies for groups of all ages.

Want to use Explore the Bible with other age groups?

Preview Explore the Bible for students and adults at LifeWay.com/ExploreTheBible

Now you can choose the Bible translation that appears in your study!

CHECK OUT THESE ADDITIONAL STUDY OPTIONS TO MEET ALL OF YOUR PROGRAMMING NEEDS THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:



BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE: KIDS

Combine creative teaching elements and hands-on learning to teach kids Bible truth and give them specific ways to apply it to their lives. Age-specific content is based on the Levels of Biblical Learning and packaged in a way that helps you disciple kids and strengthen families.

biblestudiesforlife.com



WORSHIP FOR LIFE: KIDS

Solid biblical teaching, engaging worship, group games, and take-home family resources—all wrapped in a fun, energetic experience that your kids will love! Use it as a stand-alone large group program or hand-in-hand with

Bible Studies For Life: Kids.

lifeway.com/worshipforlife



THE GOSPEL PROJECT FOR KIDS

The entire gospel story like kids have never seen it before! Each week, through videos, music, activities and more, kids connect biblical events to God's ultimate plan of redemption through Christ.

gospelproject.com/kids

