

Finding Jesus

Gospels



...these are the very scriptures that testify about me." John 5:39

Victorious Light

Finding Jesus

Gospels

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Illustrations by Alexander Skibelski

Cover art by Lesia Talbert

Printed by Victorious Light

VictoriousLight.org



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Jesus the King

Who is Jesus and what is the Bible really about?

The Bible is one story that leads to Jesus. Jesus is at the center of every part of the Bible.

Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. He is woven like a tapestry throughout the entire Bible.

God created the world by words. He created man in His own image (Genesis 1:28) and man was meant to rule and reign over the earth as part of the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God.

When Adam and Eve ate of the tree, sin entered the world. Man lost his right to rule; he had voluntarily turned over his domain to the enemy.

But God had a plan of redemption

Jesus was always the plan. He was the "lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Revelation 13:8) He was the "seed" spoken of by God in Genesis 3:15. The reader follows this "seed" through the Bible, looking and waiting for the One who will come and save the people and restore God's kingdom on earth.

Prophecies of Jesus

Throughout scripture we see repeated themes and patterns that all point to Jesus. Words were spoken throughout the centuries prophesying about this "seed," this Messiah, who would come to save his people. The prophecies were hidden and spoken in mysteries (1 Corinthians 2:6-8) so that the rulers of this world would not be able to prevent His coming.

The Word

God created the world with words, and all the prophecies of Jesus had to be through words. Everything was prophesied, in a mystery, but it all led to exactly who Jesus would be. But when the fulness of time was come, these words came together and formed the seed, that combined with a young virgin (seed of a woman) became the Son of God, the Word. (John 1:1)

This WORD, Jesus, through his death and resurrection, conquered death and the principalities of darkness. He restored the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven. We reign with Him as the body of Christ. And we can reign in this life with him and in the life to come. (Romans 5:17, 21)

This curriculum, *Finding Jesus*, is designed to do just that. He can be found from Genesis to Revelation.





READ THIS FIRST!

Teaching the Lessons

This guide is meant to be a Bible study for the instructor.

These lessons are not written as a script, nor designed to tell you exactly what to say. The lessons are written to help you gain a better understanding of the passages in the Bible.

Each lesson is designed to put the Bible into perspective by showing the historical context, Biblical context, and what was happening on or around that time. Some lessons refer back to the original meaning of the words - the original Hebrew language in which the Old Testament was written, or the Greek in which the New Testament was originally written. Each lesson has multiple cross-references to take the teacher to other places in scripture that are relevant to the story, and also to the message being taught. The author of this curriculum is not attempting to write theology, but to tell the reader a story and highlight other scriptures within the Bible so that the reader can decide. The Bible is meant to be interpreted by the Bible. It is the most complex piece of literature ever written, and contains over 63,000 cross-references.

1. Study the material.

Before the lesson, read the Bible passages first. Then **study** the notes and re-read the passage, multiple times if necessary. If the references give the accounts in more than one book or passage, familiarize yourself with versions in all passages. When you study, always read a few verses before and a few verses after for context. See if there is something that the Lord shows you that will enhance your telling of the story.

The gospels can be challenging to teach, as there are multiple accounts in different gospels. Read and study all the passages in each gospel. Take notes, combine the information in a way that will be helpful to you. Then choose the gospel from which you prefer to teach that particular story. Each lesson may have a different gospel that holds more information or present a more clear narrative, and is up to you as the teacher to choose the passage that speaks to you.

This teacher guide contains many cross-references. These are not-necessarily intended to be read to the students. The cross-references are included for personal study of the material, and designed to help the teacher gain a deeper understanding of the material so they can give a better explanation to the students.

2. Teach **ONLY** from the Bible.

Read the lesson and know the material, but **always** teach from the Bible. You do not need to read the Bible passage word for word, but can paraphrase it for your audience *without changing the meaning*. It is possible to put it into words that your audience will understand without changing the Word of God. When you teach directly from the Bible, it allows the Holy Spirit to speak directly to the teacher and the students. It gives the Holy Spirit the opportunity to emphasize what is in the passage that is specifically relevant to the listener. The Word of God is alive and powerful!



Teaching the Lessons:

3. **Help create a mental picture of the scene.**

Picture it like you were there. This material is designed to tell the story in such a way that helps the listener imagine what it be like if they were there. Elaborate on the story, and help them think about what the characters would have been thinking, doing and feeling, but also being careful to distinguish between what might be speculated, and the definitive details told in the Word.

4. **Ask a lot of questions.**

The lessons are designed to be interactive; they are not intended to be a lecture. Ask a lot of questions, and allow your students to ask questions also. Questions and discussions make the listeners think.

You know your students! Do not limit yourself to the discussion passages suggested in the material. Feel free to make up your own questions, begin your own discussions. Discuss things in the story that would be relevant to situations with which your students can understand. And ask questions that encourage discussion. Let the kids participate in the study of the Word of God.

5. **Relate to the characters.**

Remember that the Bible is a real story about real people doing real things. Help your listeners to not see it as a distant story, but a story with characters with which they can relate.

Finding Jesus in every lesson.

Every lesson ends with "Jesus in the Story." The lessons in the gospels will point back to prophecies of Jesus. The lessons in the Old Testament will point forward to the prophecies of Jesus. He IS the Word of God, and the central core, focus, theme and meaning of the entire Bible. Tell the story first, and incorporate the Jesus in the Story themes into the lesson, being sure to make Him the ultimate focus of everything you teach.

Multiple Age Levels:

This material is for ages 3-99. You are the teacher. A story you know is a story you can tell. These lessons can be adapted to any age level. If you are teaching to very young children, tell them the story in a way that they can understand. If you are teaching to older children, give them more information. And if you are teaching to young people, you can bring in some of the cross-referenced scriptures, and discuss how they connect with the story. If you teach to adults, use it as a full study guide to look up all the scriptures and discuss. Always teach a little above what you think they can understand; you may be surprised at the comprehension of your audience.



Teaching the Lessons:

Weekly Lesson:

1. Begin each week by discussing the lesson from the previous week. Ask questions, see what the students remember from the last lesson.
2. You do not have to teach the lessons in the order in this guide. It is up to you if you would like to teach a certain theme, a certain story, or a certain time frame. This is your classroom.
3. Feel free to lead children to Jesus after each lesson or if you feel led by the Holy Spirit to do so. You can tell by the response to the lesson if they are ready. And remember, you know your students!

Memory Verses and Questions:

The lessons are designed with a memory verse and questions for the teacher to display to the class. If you choose, you may ask the students to bring a "church notebook" where they may write down the memory verse every week. Writing down the scripture will definitely help with memorization, and this will help the child learn the responsibility of keeping the notebook and bringing it every week.

The teacher may also choose to give the children the questions on the display page. The children can write down the questions and take them home to look up the answers, or simply write the answers in their book. It is completely up to the teacher how to use these resources.

Coloring Pages:

Each lesson has a black and white coloring page. If you have the ability to print copies, feel free to make copies and distribute these to the younger children. If not, you may choose to have them recreate the illustration with their own drawing in their notebook.

Get Creative!

So many of the stories in the Bible can be acted out. Many of the Psalms can be acted out.

Have fun with it! Creating a play or drama from a story helps the children remember the story. Let them help you design the play. Let them put their own interpretation into the characters. Make it fun, and make the Bible memorable!





An Evening Visit

John 3:1-21

Life of Jesus

Teaching the Lesson:

This was at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Jesus had been baptized of John, he had done his first miracle of turning the water into wine, and then cleansed the temple of those who were buying and selling.

After the temple event, the Jews came to Jesus and asked him what authority he had to do the things he did.

Discuss: An event is being held at the temple, and a marketplace is set for people to do business. Someone that may or not be familiar to the people at the event comes in, tears everything down, and tells the people to leave.

People are wondering, Who is this? Who told him he could do this? Did someone tell him he could take charge?

Did someone tell him to shut everything down?

Then, on the feast day at Passover, many people believed in Jesus when they saw the miracles he did. (John 2:23)

Cleansing the temple was a very overt, very bold move on the part of Jesus. Immediately afterwards, the Jews came to Jesus. They asked him for a sign to show them he had the authority to act as he did.

Soon afterwards, one of the Pharisees named Nicodemus came to Jesus at night.

Who was Nicodemus?

He was a Pharisee.

Pharisees were a sect, or group of Jews who were highly respected for their religious beliefs and practices. They were seen by others as experts for their knowledge of the scriptures, and they held great influence among the common people.

From a biblical context Pharisees were seen as those who were seeking distinction and praise by observing rituals such as ceremonial washings, fasting, prayers, and giving of alms to the poor. The gospels view them as insincere in their holiness, but they were very proud of their own good works. The Pharisees believed in a Messiah, and in accountability for individual deeds.

The Pharisees were highly educated, and they knew the Old Testament scriptures and passages very well. They interpreted the Old Testament laws and other writings very strictly, and held others to their interpretations and practices. They held places of influence in the community, and although they did not perform priestly duties, they did influence temple rituals and practices. They were able to make decisions to put someone "out of the synagogue," which is essentially casting them out of the community of the Jews.

Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews, which meant he was an elite religious leader with authority. He was well-known; as a person who held leadership among the Jews, he would have been recognized by the people. They would have looked up to him and highly respected him. Because of his leadership position, most likely he was an older man.

He was a scholar of the law, and the Old Testament.

He would have been respected, of privileged status. He was most likely wealthy as we can see at the time of Jesus' crucifixion.

He would have been a very devout religious man who prayed multiple times a day.

He had a place in the council of the Pharisees as we see later in Jesus' ministry.

Why did he come to Jesus at night?

It seems very likely that he came at night to visit secretly. He was curious about Jesus and his ministry. It could be that he was embarrassed to be seen associating with Jesus, or he was simply trying to avoid persecution from his fellow Pharisees.

We see in John 2:20 that the Jews already came to Jesus asking him where he got the authority to perform the temple cleansing. We can guess that the Pharisees probably held a council meeting about what he had done.





An Evening Visit

It seems that regardless of what has been said about Jesus, or already decided by the other Pharisees, Nicodemus wants to talk to Jesus personally, and he doesn't seem to want other people to know, so he comes at night.

Nicodemus said to Jesus,

We know that you are a teacher from God, because no one can do these miracles that you do except God is with him.

Now, we definitely know they have been talking about Jesus. The Pharisees have noticed him. They saw his bold statement he made about the temple, but now he is also healing people and performing many miracles.

There are a couple of ways of looking at what is happening here.

It is possible that Nicodemus is genuinely curious. He really wants to know what is going on but he's afraid of his own reputation so he comes to Jesus at night looking for some answers.

Another possibility is that this could be a political move. Nicodemus could see that Jesus is already gaining influence among the common people. Perhaps Nicodemus comes at night as a representative of the ruling Pharisees.

Jesus already knows the Pharisees disagree with him, but Nicodemus could be thinking, you have something, we have something, let's work together on this; let's talk. We are also told later in the gospel of John that the Pharisees were concerned about Jesus because they felt like he was a threat to their political position with Rome. (John 11:47-48) This could have been an attempt to gain favor with Jesus early in his ministry.

Jesus does not even respond to Nicodemus' comment, nor does he take it as a compliment. Jesus is not impressed or intimidated by Nicodemus and his position of authority. He completely disregards it, and seems to completely change the subject.

Jesus says, Truly I say to you, unless you are born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God.

Discuss: Do you think Nicodemus thought he was already in the kingdom of God?

Nicodemus is a very religious person. He is very moral.

Is Jesus trying to tell him that he has it all wrong?

Nicodemus responds, How can a man be born again? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?

We can look at this as Nicodemus speaking foolishly, but it seems he's actually a pretty intelligent man. So it is more likely that he is possibly speaking sarcastically. Nicodemus says, What are you saying? I have to become a baby again?

This could have been quite offensive to Nicodemus. He's educated, he's been teaching the Bible his whole life, and he's a person of influence. It would seem that his life is quite a success. It is often harder for people who have a good life and everything they want to see their need for God. But Jesus is telling him that everything he thinks he knows about God and his kingdom is wrong. He needs to start over.

Again, Jesus completely ignores Nicodemus' comment. Jesus rephrases his earlier comment.

Jesus says, Unless one is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Discuss: What does this mean?

When Jesus says "born of water" it seems to be referring to the physical birth of a baby born from it's mother's womb.

But this is not enough. You have to have a new Spirit. This new Spirit is the only way you can enter, or even see, the kingdom of God.

This is something that should at least sound familiar to Nicodemus.



An Evening Visit

What is Jesus talking about?

God created man in his likeness, in his image. Man was designed to represent God on the earth. (Genesis 1:26). When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, it changed everything. Their children were born in their likeness, not God's. (Genesis 5:3) Every person born into the world after the fall of man was born into sin (1 Corinthians 15:22).

Jesus says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

God knew that in order to save mankind, he had to offer them new life. The Old Testament prophesied that God would give them a new heart, and put a new spirit in you. (Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:26-28) This new Spirit was his Spirit, the personal presence of God.

Jesus compared wind to the Spirit. We cannot see wind. Jesus said, The wind blows, and you hear the sound but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. He said it is the same with the Spirit; meaning you cannot see the Spirit, but you know it is there and you see the effects of it.

The only way that God can communicate and have a relationship with man is through the Spirit. God is a spiritual being, and we have to relate to him on a spiritual level. (John 4:24). He had to give us his spirit so we could communicate with him.

Nicodemus did not understand. He said, How can this be?

Jesus said, Are you a master of Israel, and you do not know these things?

Is Jesus saying that he is studied but the way he has interpreted is false?

Then Jesus goes on speaking. He asks Nicodemus if he doesn't believe earthly things, how will he believe the heavenly things? Jesus says that he is the only one who came down here from heaven. He's basically telling Nicodemus that he knows, because he has been there.

Jesus goes on to prophesy of his death.

He goes back to a familiar story that Nicodemus would have known. He says that just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so the Son of Man (Jesus) must be lifted up.

He was speaking of a time when the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness. The people were complaining and the Lord sent serpents among the people and many of them died. Then the people repented, and asked the Lord to take the serpents away. The Lord told Moses to make a serpent out of brass and put it on a pole. When the people that had been bitten looked at the serpent, they would live.

Jesus was saying that he would be lifted up on the cross, and then "whosoever believes on him would not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:15-17)

Jesus said that God did not send his son to condemn the world, but to save it.

We do not know how Nicodemus responded to Jesus.

But, we can find two other times in scripture that Nicodemus is mentioned, and it seems very likely that he came to believe in Jesus.

The Pharisees were holding a council meeting and were upset that no one had arrested Jesus. Nicodemus was at this meeting, and he defended Jesus. (John 7:45-53)

After Jesus was crucified, Nicodemus was one of the people who came to the tomb when they buried the body. Nicodemus brought a 100 pound mixture of very expensive spices and aloes to anoint the body of Jesus. He was one of the people who helped wrap the body of Christ with linen and spices.

Jesus in the Story



Mankind was originally made by God to be His representatives here on earth. When Adam and Eve ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, sin entered the world. God's perfect man was now flawed, and every man after him was born into sin. (Romans 5:12)

God gave the Israelites a set of laws to follow in an attempt to keep them separate and preserve them until Jesus came into the world to complete God's plan of salvation. His whole plan was to have a relationship with his people, but sin kept dominating people, and they were completely unable to follow the laws given to the people by God through Moses. Again and again, the people sinned against God. (Romans 3:20)

The only way for God to have a relationship with humans was for God to give them a way to be redeemed from sin once and for all. Jesus was the only way. He had to come as a human, and be the perfect human, to save humanity from their sins. Then people would be able to receive His righteousness, not their own, which could never be good enough. They had to have the righteousness of Jesus to completely redeem them from sin. (Romans 3:22; 4:5)

When Jesus was lifted up on the cross, sin was nailed to the cross. (Galatians 2:20) Our old man died with Christ, and we have risen with him. (Colossians 3:1). Because the old sinful man was crucified, we are now able to receive a new heart and a new Spirit, God's spirit. And God is able to finally have a relationship with his people because he is able to fellowship with them through the Spirit. (Romans 5:1; Colossians 2:13-15.)

Without this Spirit, there is no way to enter the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is here. When you accept Jesus, you are in the kingdom. You are seated with Christ. (Ephesians 2:6) But it is a spiritual realm, and without the Spirit of God living within you, you are not able to see the kingdom of heaven. (Romans 8:6-9; Ephesians 3:12)

An Evening Visit



John 3:1-21

MEMORY VERSE

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

Answer the Questions

1. Who was Nicodemus?
2. What did Jesus say a person has to do to see the kingdom of God?
3. Why did God send his son into the world? (John 3:17)
4. Who are those that are condemned and why? (John 3:18)





Finding Jesus

is a curriculum designed to help children find Jesus in every story of the Bible. Because the Bible is one continuous story that leads to Jesus, He can be found from Genesis to Revelation. Finding Jesus is a Bible study designed for the teacher. This one-year Gospels volume includes 52 lessons which can be adapted to teach any age from 3-99. The instructor customizes the lesson for their audience, using only the Bible as a text. The teacher decides how to relay the information to their students, with regard to their background and level of education.

Jesus IS the Word of God.

***Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.
He is woven like a scarlet thread throughout the tapestry of the Bible.***

VICTORIOUS LIGHT

About the Author



Laura Baca is a lifelong student of the Bible with a heart for reaching the next generation with the truth and love of God's Word. Over ten years ago, while teaching in children's church, she began to recognize a gap in the way that biblical truths were being communicated to young hearts. This sparked the idea to write a curriculum designed to help children

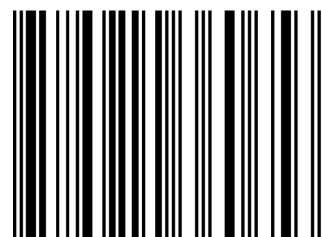
connect deeply with Scripture and find Jesus in every story of the Bible. Once her children were grown, she prayerfully developed this curriculum to speak to children across different cultures and backgrounds. In September 2024, a divine meeting with a Kenyan woman on a layover in Istanbul led to the formation

of Victorious Light, a non-profit organization established in 2025 with a desire to make this resource available to all. Laura is committed to offer materials freely to anyone, anywhere in the world. Through Victorious Light, children around the globe can encounter the transformative love of Jesus Christ through the stories of the Bible.

www.victoriouslight.org

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ISBN 978-9914-36-065-3



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