

Finding Jesus

Gospels



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

Victorious Light

Finding Jesus

Gospels

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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!





Workers in the Vineyard

Matthew 20:1-16

Parables of Jesus

Teaching the Lesson:

Jesus opens the parable with "for the kingdom of heaven is like...". He's showing a contrast here between the way that we see things here on earth and the way that God's kingdom works. It usually operates in a completely opposite way of what we are accustomed to.

Ask the kids where the kingdom of heaven is? Who lives there? Help them as they answer and guide them to these truths:

The kingdom of heaven does not just refer to the heavens and God's home; there *is* a coming kingdom which will be established in the future upon Christ's return. But right now, the kingdom of heaven is here, but you cannot see it. It wasn't ushered in the way the disciples thought it would be; they were expecting a physical kingdom where Christ would redeem Israel, overthrow Rome, and sit on the throne. They did not understand that it was not yet time, and that instead faith in his death and resurrection brought the kingdom to earth within us. The kingdom exists, and those who put their faith and trust in Jesus are living in it here on this earth. It operates differently than the world, and Jesus is constantly telling people how the kingdom works, and how we should see things with a kingdom mentality. In the kingdom, the last will be first, and those who wish to be first must be a servant to all. (Mark 10:44).

Luke 17:20-21

... the kingdom of God does not come in such a way as to be seen. No one will say, "look, here it is!"; or "There it is!"; because the kingdom of God is within you.

1 Corinthians 4:20

The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

Romans 14:17

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

He begins his story: a man who was the master, a householder, or a landowner, went out early in the morning (about 6:00 a.m.) to hire workers for his vineyard. I think we can probably assume this was the first hour of the day. They agreed on a price and he sent them into the vineyard to work. Some translations say a denarius, and some translations say a penny. It was the standard Roman coin at the time, and was equal to a one days wage. It was actually a fair wage, and some sources say it was the price of ten donkeys.

In the third hour (9:00 a.m.) the man went out and saw other people standing in the marketplace, not having any work. He told them to also go into the vineyard, and he would pay them "whatever is right."

This happened again at the sixth hour (noon), and the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.)

Then at the eleventh hour (5:00 p.m.), he went out and found some others standing and not working, and he asked them why they were standing there all day not working. They replied that it was because no one had hired them. He told them also to go into the vineyard, and whatever wage is right is what they would receive.

When the evening was come, the master told his steward to call all the workers and give them their wages beginning with the last workers and ending with the first. It was customary at that time to be paid wages daily.

When the workers that started at the 11th hour came, they received the wage agreed on, the denarius. When the first workers came, they assumed that they would receive more, after seeing how much the last workers received. But everyone was paid the same exact wage.

Use this as a talking point.. How would you feel? Does this sound fair? It's very natural of us to think this seems unfair. But did Jesus think it was unfair? If we think one thing, and Jesus thinks another, who is wrong? We are the ones that are wrong!

The workers who had been there longer started complaining against the master. They said, these last workers have only been here one hour, but you *made them equal* to us who have worked out in the heat all day.

Notice that they wanted more based on what they had done.





Workers in the Vineyard

Then the master said, I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for me for this amount? Take what is yours, go on your way, and I will give to everyone just as I gave to you. Isn't it lawful for me to do what I want with my own? Are you jealous because I am kind to others?

Jesus ends with, the last will be first, the first will be last. Many are called, but few are chosen. This doesn't mean that God hasn't chosen them. They were called by God, but they weren't chosen because of their own jealousy and their own grumbling.

Jesus in the Story



Jesus gave no explanation for this parable, but it speaks of those who try to earn salvation. If you take this back to Matthew 19:27-30, He is answering Peter's question about what the disciples will have. Jesus answers him, but it is still what we may consider to backwards from what we normally think. It's not for all the good deeds that people will be rewarded, it is for following Christ, and leaving everything for Him.

Then Jesus goes into the story of the wages. These workers did not think it was fair that everyone was paid the same, even though they received what they agreed to when they were hired. They thought it wasn't fair that the people who got hired at the end of the day got just as much as those who worked all day.

As humans we often think this way. We want to try to earn our way into the kingdom by doing good deeds and obeying all the commandments. We compare ourselves with people who aren't as "good" as we think we are. We build ourselves up by all the good things we have done, and it makes us proud. Salvation has nothing to do with us. It has everything to do with Jesus and what he did FOR us. Salvation is a gift from God, and no one can brag about what they have done, or that they were so good that God chose them.

Discuss the following verses:

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast.

What does this mean? By grace we have been saved. Talk this through with the kids. It was by faith, and only faith, that we received this grace.

It was a gift. Talk about a gift. Did you pay for it? Did you earn it? - no, not if it was truly a gift.

You cannot earn your salvation. If you could do enough good works to earn it, then you could brag to others about what you have done. If it's a gift, it gives honor to the one who gave you the gift - God - and brings glory (attention, honor, praise) only to Jesus.

Titus 3:5 (NLT)

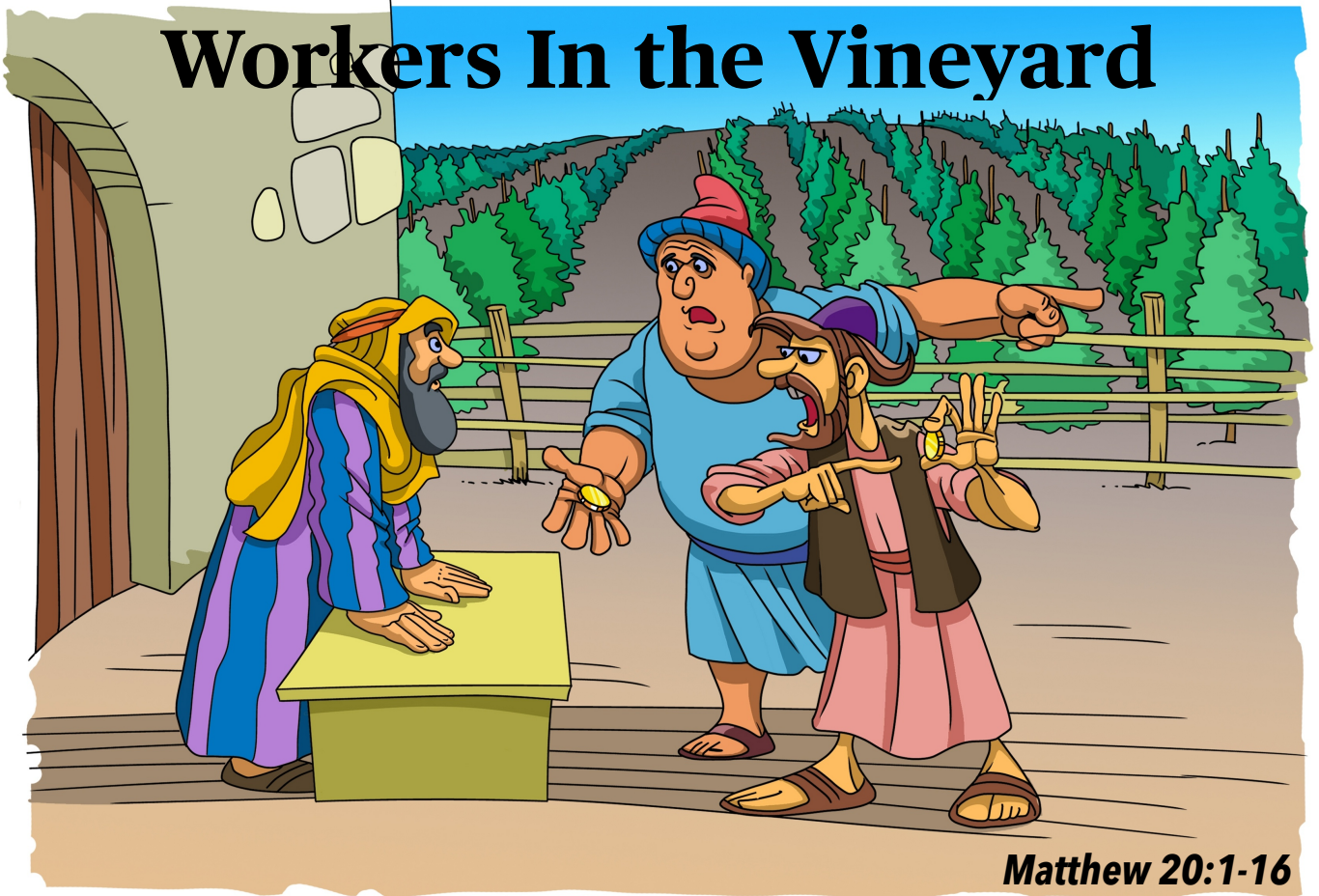
He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.

Romans 10:3 (NLT)

For they don't understand God's way of making people right with himself. Refusing to accept God's way, they cling to their own way of getting right with God by trying to keep the law.



Workers In the Vineyard



Matthew 20:1-16

MEMORY VERSE

*Not by works of
righteousness which
we have done, but
according to his mercy
he waded us, through
the washing of
regeneration and
renewing of the Holy
Spirit....*

Titus 3:5

Answer the Questions

Ephesians 2:8-9

1. What have we been saved by?
2. What have we been saved through?
3. Were we saved by anything we did?
4. What was our salvation from God?
5. If it were by our works then we could do what?





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

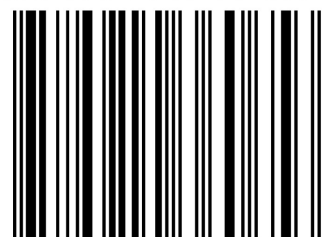
connect deeply with Scripture and find Jesus in every story of the Bible. Once her children were grown, she prayerfully developed this curriculum to speak to children across different cultures and backgrounds. In September 2024, a divine meeting with a Kenyan woman on a layover in Istanbul led to the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