

Finding Jesus

Gospels



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

Victorious Light

Finding Jesus

Gospels

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lbaca@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!





Unable to Speak

Luke 1:5-25; 39-80

Birth of Jesus

Teaching the Lesson:

The story begins as we are introduced to Zacharias the priest. He and his wife, Elisabeth, both came from a lineage of priests. We are told that they were both righteous before God, they obeyed the commandments and laws.

Zacharias and Elisabeth were older. Elisabeth had not been able to have any children, and now she was too old to have a baby.

Zacharias was in the temple performing his priest duties; he had been chosen by lot to burn incense when it was his turn.

Do you know what it means to be chosen by lot? One of the ways of choosing lots is when pieces of paper or small objects placed into a container. Each person takes one piece of paper or an object. One of the objects or papers is different than the others, and the person who chooses the one that is different is chosen for a specific purpose.

While Zacharias was in the temple, a large number of people were outside of the temple praying.

Inside the temple, an angel of the Lord appeared to Zacharias; the angel was standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

Zacharias was in the Holy Place. This was a special place inside the temple, but not the most inner part. The most inner part of the temple was called the Holy of Holies, and only the high priest was able to enter once a year. Zacharias was standing in an area that was not very large, so where the angel appeared was very close to Zacharias.

As soon as Zacharias saw the angel, he was scared and very afraid.

How would you react if an angel appeared suddenly?

The angel said to Zacharias, "Fear not." All throughout the Bible when angels appear, they almost always said, Fear not, or don't be afraid.

The angel tells Zacharias, "Fear not: your prayer is heard, and your wife Elisabeth is going to have a son, and you will name him John."

The angel continues: He tells Zacharias that he will have joy and gladness, and many people will rejoice when he is born. He will be great in God's sight, and he will not drink wine or strong drink. He will be filled with the Holy Ghost even in his mother's womb. He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord. He will go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, and turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to wisdom of the just, and make the people ready for the Lord.

Wow! This is going to be a really special baby! He is going to grow up to be a great man of God with a special call on his life. He will be joyful, and make others joyful. He will be filled with the Holy Ghost - before he's even born! He will turn people's hearts back to the Lord, and make people ready for the Lord. Discuss this.

What would you think if an angel came and told you this great news? It's very specific. He appeared and told the exact things that John would do.

Zacharias has obviously been praying about this; the angel says, "Your prayer has been heard." But, Elisabeth is an old lady; she is too old to have children. This is probably what Zacharias was thinking about, and he seems to put more value on this than the words of the angel. Not only has his prayer been heard, his child is going to be the man that was prophesied about in Isaiah that will prepare the way for Jesus! This is amazing news.

Zacharias does not readily accept the words of the angel. He is skeptical. He asks, "How will I know this? I am an old man, and my wife is very old.

This angel is a special messenger sent from God. Zacharias must have known that this was an unusual happening. He knew that this was not a human, and that this whole situation was supernatural. Yet, he still questioned God. Zacharias was a righteous man, but he was looking more at the circumstances than considering the words of the Lord. Even people who are following the Lord do not always have the right priorities, and do not always place value on the things of the Lord above all else.





Unable to Speak

It does not specifically say, but the reader can almost feel that the the angel appears to be somewhat indignant. He answers Zacharias and says,

"I am Gabriel, that stands in the presence of God; and am sent to speak to you and you these glad tidings (good news!)"

He's basically saying, I am an angel who stands in God's presence. That means he is an important messenger. He is saying that GOD sent him to speak to Zacharias and give him this exciting news.

And what does Zacharias do? Does he value the words of a messenger who has been in the presence of God? Someone with a special message sent to him from God?

Gabriel continues, "You (Zacharias) will be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these words are performed, *because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their season.*"

This is quite a statement. Zacharias will not be able to speak until the baby is born, because he doubted and did not believe the words of Gabriel. This makes the offense of unbelief much more serious than we often think it is.

Why do you think that Gabriel said that Zacharias would not be able to talk? Why would this matter?

Our words are SO important. We have creative power in our words, and are able to speak death and life with our tongues (Proverbs 18:21.) It is possible that Zacharias could have messed all of this up. If he had spoken his doubt and unbelief, and convinced Elisabeth of the same, this whole situation could have been different. Gabriel was going to ensure that God's promises would be fulfilled. As humans, we actually have the ability to negate the promises and power of God in our lives through our words.

Did Zacharias doubt the fulfillment of his prayers? It seems that he was no longer expecting them to be answered (verse 18.)

Meanwhile, there is a large crowd waiting outside for Zacharias. This was a special ritual, and they were wondering why he was taking so long in the temple. When he came outside, he could not speak to them. They all thought he must have seen a vision in the temple because he made signs to them, but couldn't talk.

Zacharias fulfilled his days at the temple, and then he went back to his house. As Zacharias could not speak, we are not sure if Elisabeth knew about the visit from the angel or what he said. But after a time, Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth knew that she was going to have a baby. She hid herself for five months, and said that the Lord answered her prayers and taken away her disgrace from people.

Six months later, the angel Gabriel visited Mary to tell her that she would have a baby who would be the Son of God, and his name would be Jesus. Her response was different; she was not doubtful. (This lesson will not cover the details of verses 26-38, as those will be covered in a different lesson.)

Gabriel had told Mary that Elisabeth, her cousin, was expecting a baby and that she was already in her sixth month. After Gabriel visited Mary, she quickly went into the city of Judaea to stay with Elisabeth. As soon as Mary came in the door and Elisabeth heard her, the baby inside Elisabeth jumped, and the baby was filled with the Holy Ghost.

Perhaps Elisabeth knew the prophecies about John, and the message from Gabriel. She knew something was happening when Mary came in. Elisabeth said, you are blessed among women, and blessed is the child of your womb. And Elisabeth knew that the mother of her Lord had come to her. She told Mary that her baby had leaped for joy in her womb, and that Mary was blessed *because she believed*. Just as Zacharias had been made dumb because he did not believe, Mary was blessed because she did believe

Mary spends some time praising God and speaking to Elisabeth about the prophecies. Then she stayed with Elisabeth for three months before going home.

It came time for Elisabeth's baby to be born, and she had a son. Her neighbors and cousins heard how the Lord had showed mercy on her, and they rejoiced with her.





Unable to Speak

At this point, several of the prophecies have already been fulfilled. Elisabeth conceived a child, he was filled with the Holy Ghost in the womb when Mary visited, and everyone rejoiced when the baby boy was born.

On the eighth day, the baby boy was circumcised. This is the day when a name would be given to a boy. The people called him Zacharias, after his father. But Elisabeth, said, "No. He will be called John." All the people were surprised and questioned Elisabeth because she did not have any relatives named John. They then made signs to Zacharias to ask him what to call the baby.

It seems that perhaps Zacharias was not just dumb, but it was very possible that he was also deaf. If he were able to hear, it seems like they would have just spoken to him, and asked him about the baby's name. But they had to use signs to speak to him.

Zacharias then asked for something to write on. They brought him a tablet and he wrote "His name is John." All the people were very surprised, and **immediately** Zacharias' tongue was loosened and he was able to speak, and he praised God.

This scared and amazed everyone. This news of what had happened spread quickly and everyone in Judaea heard what had happened. They all wondered what kind of man John would grow up to be. They knew something special was happening, and the hand of the Lord was upon John.

Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost also. He began to prophesy, and connected the Old Testament prophecies concerning John and Jesus. He referred to the prophecies (Isaiah 9:2; 40:3, 42:16; Malachi 3:1; Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4) that John would be the one to prepare the way of Jesus, and that Jesus would bring light to those who sit in darkness, and guide into the way of peace.

This John grew up to be John the Baptist. He became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until it came time for him to appear publicly to Israel. He brought the people to repentance and ushered in the the ministry of Jesus.

Jesus in the Story



The Old Testament parallels the New Testament. Just as Elijah came before Elisha, John the Baptist came before Jesus.

Elijah is often referred to as the fiery prophet because of the judgment he showed; he represented the Old Testament law. Elisha came afterwards and had a different type of ministry; he was representative of the New Testament - the New Covenant.

There are many prophecies of John the Baptist in the Old Testament.

Some of the prophecies include: Isaiah 40:3-5, Malachi 3:1-3, 4:5-6.

Malachi refers to Elijah coming to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to the fathers before the coming of the day of the Lord. This reference to John the Baptist goes directly with what was spoken to Zacharias by Gabriel. Zacharias would have known these prophecies but he became distracted when he looked at the circumstances rather than what had been spoken in the Word of God.

In the New Testament, there were also many references made to show that John the Baptist was the fulfillment of those Old Testament prophecies:

Matthew 3:1-12; 11:7-4

Mark 1:1-8; Mark 9:11-13

Luke 1:8-9, 13-17, 76-79; Luke 3:1-16; Luke 7:24-29

John 1:6, 29-34; John 3:27-36; John 5:31-35

John the Baptist was a very important fulfillment of prophecy, and had to come first to usher in the ministry of Christ.





Unable to Speak



MEMORY VERSE

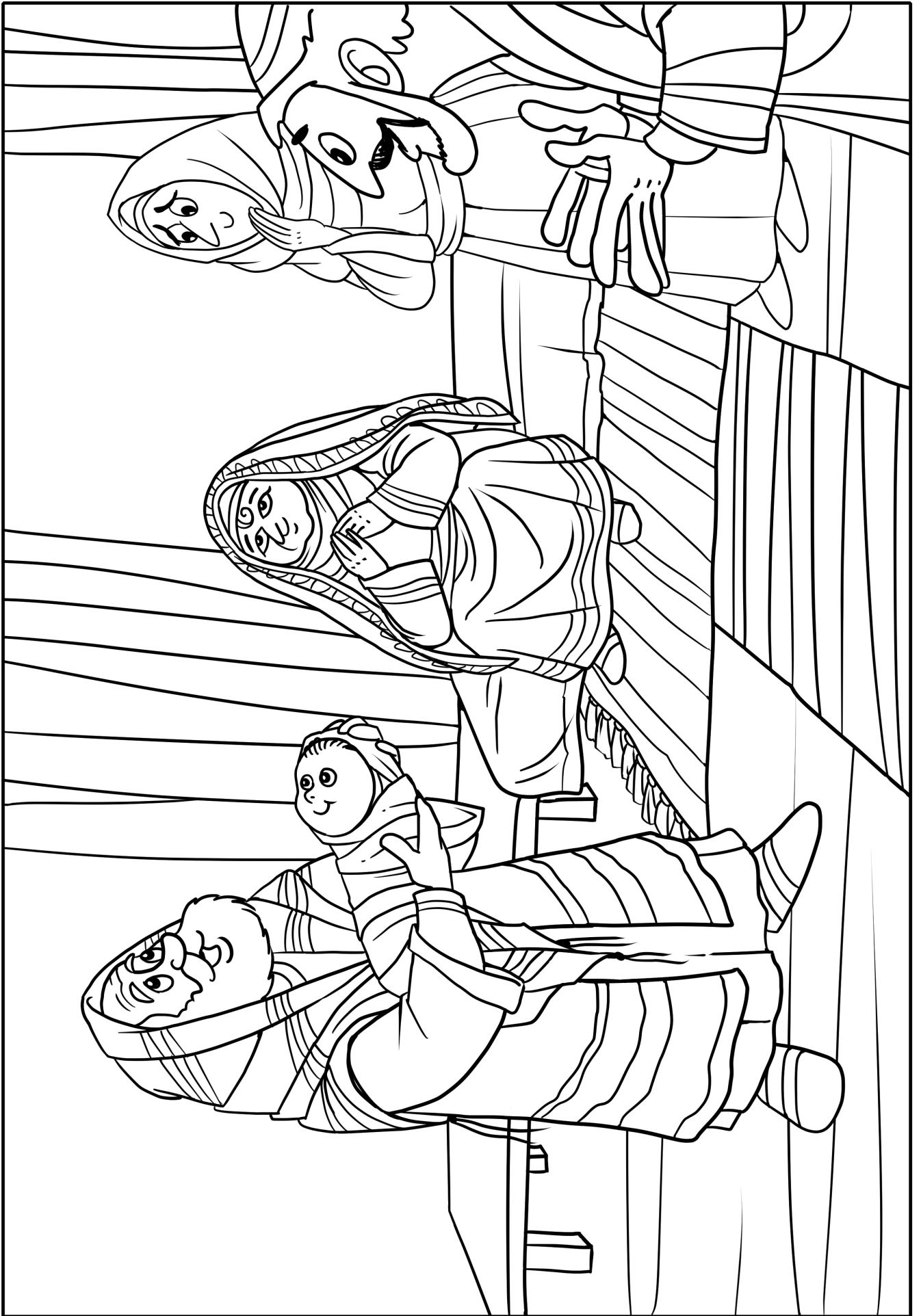
*For there is not a word
on my tongue, but
behold, O LORD you
know it altogether.
You have hedged me
behind and before,
and laid your hand
upon me.*

Psalm 139:4-5

Answer the Questions

Luke 1:7,18,20,63-64

1. What do we know about Zacharias and Elizabeth?
2. How did Zacharias respond when Gabriel told him the news?
3. Why did Gabriel say Zacharias would not be able to speak?
4. When was Zacharias able to speak again?





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

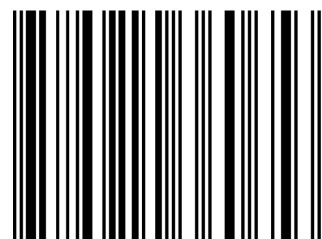
connect deeply with Scripture and find Jesus in every story of the Bible. Once her children were grown, she prayerfully developed this curriculum to speak to children across different cultures and backgrounds. In September 2024, a divine meeting with a Kenyan woman on a layover in Istanbul led to the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