

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!





A Withered Hand

Matthew 12:1-14
Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-6
Luke 6:1-11

Life of Jesus: Miracles

Teaching the Lesson:

Before class, read this story in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Teach from one gospel, but familiarize yourself with the accounts in each gospel; when you tell the story, combine information from all three gospels.

Begin with discussion about the Sabbath day. What day of the week is the Sabbath? It is the seventh day, Saturday. Why was the Sabbath day the seventh day? It was because God rested on the seventh day when he created the world. What were they not supposed to do on the Sabbath day? Work. How did the Jewish people view the Sabbath? Some answers may include: they thought it was holy, they were very respectful of the Sabbath day and did not do any work.

Who were the Pharisees? They were not priests, but they were a group of religious Jewish leaders who were very strict in the way that they interpreted the laws of Moses. They knew ALL the rules of the law, all 613 laws, and then they created extra rules for all of the people to follow so that they wouldn't break the law of Moses. Sometimes when people follow all the rules they think they are better than everyone else, and it can make them *proud*. The Pharisees would pride themselves on doing everything right, and look down on everyone else.

The Pharisees were always trying to catch Jesus doing something wrong. They did not like Him because he did not operate by their rules.

Begin telling the story that Jesus and his disciples were walking through a field of grain on the Sabbath day. They were hungry, and so they picked some grain to eat. Some Bible translations say corn, and some say grain. It is believed that grain is the more accurate interpretation here. Talk to the kids about this process. First you would pick the grain, then you would have to rub off the kernels to eat it.

Can you guess who saw Jesus and his disciples pick the grain? The Pharisees. They accused Jesus, and told him he did something that was against the law to do on the Sabbath day. They said that what they were doing was harvesting - that picking the grain and removing it was work.

Jesus responds to the Pharisees by telling them that there was a time that David and his men ate the bread of the priests when they were hungry. David was not supposed to eat this bread, but God did not condemn him for it; they were not guilty. Jesus told the Pharisees that the priests in the temple broke the Sabbath laws because they had to work on the Sabbath, just like preachers do their work on Sunday. But they were not guilty, because someone had to do these duties.

The Sabbath was meant to help and bless people, not to oppress them. The Pharisees were taking the things that God meant for good and twisting them; they used the law to oppress and condemn the people. Jesus was trying to show them that God's whole purpose of the law was to help people and bless people. Man made it all about the following the rules to the extreme, and missed the whole point of what God intended for the law in the first place.

Mark 2:27 (NLT)

Then Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath!"

Jesus tells them that the Son of Man is greater than the Sabbath and his disciples were not guilty.





A Withered Hand

It isn't completely clear whether the healing of the withered hand was on the same Sabbath that Jesus and his disciples picked the grain from the field. Regardless, all three of the gospels tell these as connecting stories. These stories show the attitude of the Pharisees towards the Sabbath as opposed to how Jesus views the Sabbath.

Jesus went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he taught there. When he gets to the synagogue, he sees a man who has a withered hand.

Discuss with the children what a withered hand is. What does it look like? Have they ever seen someone with a withered hand? A person's hand would be crooked and almost shriveled, and they would not be able to use it very effectively, if at all. Luke tells us that it was his right hand.

The Pharisees are all watching Jesus very closely. Everyone seems to know about this man, and that he has a withered hand.

Ask the children why the Pharisees would be watching Jesus. What were they trying to see? They were watching to see if Jesus was going to heal him. What would be wrong with healing someone? It was the Sabbath day. Is it work to heal someone? Well, the Pharisees thought it was work and it was wrong. They are watching Jesus to see if he would heal the man, so they can accuse Jesus. They are trying to catch Jesus in the middle of doing something they believe is wrong so they can arrest him. At this time, the religious leaders had political power, and they could decide who was arrested and punished.

Jesus did not care about the rules of the Pharisees. He actually healed people on the Sabbath many times. He was trying to show the people that the Pharisees thought they had all the answers, they were doing everything right, and they were actually doing everything *wrong*.

After Jesus sees the man with the withered hand, the Pharisees asked him, "Is it lawful (legal), to heal on the Sabbath day?"

Jesus does this a lot. He answers a question with a question. He doesn't always give answers, but he asks questions to try to get the people to think. Jesus says, if you had a sheep, and it wandered off and fell into a pit (a big hole in the ground) on the Sabbath day, would you go find your sheep, and lift it out of the pit? He did not get an answer; this was a rhetorical question and he wasn't really expecting an answer. Then he asks them, Isn't a man better than a sheep? Aren't people more important than sheep?

So, therefore, it is legal, it is okay *to do well* on the Sabbath day. The Pharisees did not like this answer. They would obey the law the way they wanted to.

Talk to the kids - have they ever obeyed what their parents told them to do, but not exactly what their parents wanted? They knew they weren't doing what they were supposed to, but could say to their mom or dad, well, you didn't say not to dothis or that? Pretty much everyone has done this and that's what the Pharisees did. They made their own rules and then let everyone know how good they were that they obeyed God's laws, but they weren't obeying what God had really wanted them to do.

Now, Jesus looks at the man with the withered hand and says, "Get up, and stand in the middle." Now the man has a decision to make. Is he going to stand up and come to Jesus? Picture this - Jesus is there, calling on him. The Pharisees are there, disapproving of this whole situation. Do the people in the room know the Pharisees aren't happy about this? I'm sure they do. The Pharisees are not making it a secret that they disapprove of Jesus and his methods. Is the man going to stand up and get healed and risk being the source of a huge disagreement, or is he going to choose not to stand up? What does he want most?

The man stood up. He must have wanted desperately to be healed. Then Jesus looked around the room, and asked, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good, or to do evil? To save life or destroy it?" No one answered. The gospel of Mark tells us Jesus looked around the room in anger *because of the hardness of their hearts*. Then Jesus told the man to stretch out his hand. Is this something the man could do before? Could he stretch out his hand? Well, he tried to stretch it out, and when he did, it became whole just like his other hand.





A Withered Hand

What should the response of the crowd have been? Do you think the man was excited that his hand was healed? Of course he was! Shouldn't the crowd have been happy for him? Shouldn't they have been praising God for the miracle that was done?

Instead, the Pharisees were so angry that they were filled with madness. They left the synagogue and went to have a meeting to make plans on how they could stop Jesus; they wanted to kill Him.

What is wrong with this situation? The Pharisees were angry that Jesus did something *good*. What did people think about the Pharisees? They most likely respected them or feared them; they thought these were important men who did everything right and knew all the answers. Jesus tells them how wrong they are in their heart, and that they think they are so holy but they missed the whole point of the law. They think they are obeying "the law of Moses" but the whole point of the law was to help people. The law was meant to help people do the right things until Jesus could come into the world and give them the Holy Spirit who helps them do the right things.

Jesus in the Story



Jesus' ministry was continuously exposing the motives of people's hearts. From the very beginning, God's plan was always for people to walk with him by faith. He wanted a relationship of trust with man, but this was dependent on the condition of their hearts. Until Jesus came, we were all under sin, and man's heart was only evil. People turned it into a religion of rules, and that was never what the Lord intended. God gave the law by Moses to protect the people until Jesus could come into the earth. Now through faith in Jesus, believers have received the a new heart and the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 3:21-25 (NLT)

Is there a conflict, then, between God's law and God's promises? Absolutely not! If the law could give us new life, we could be made right with God by obeying it. But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so we receive God's promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ. Before the way of faith in Christ was available to us, we were placed under guard by the law. We were kept in protective custody, so to speak, until the way of faith was revealed. Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith. And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian.

Ezekiel 36:26 (NIV)

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

It could be explained to the children that when you are little, you are told not to touch a stove, or an electrical outlet. You are not allowed to use these things because a very small child does not understand how fire works, or how electricity works. But as you get older, you have an understanding and you are allowed to use the stove for its purpose to cook, and you are allowed to plug things into outlets as you understand how they work. The law was like this. It protected us until Jesus came so we could understand how to be right with God through faith. Now we are not under the law, but under grace. Now we have a counselor in the Holy Spirit to guide us in our relationship with Jesus instead of a set of rules to follow.



Jesus in the Story



The Pharisees were doing all the “right things,” and Jesus tried over and over to tell them that they were missing the point. Jesus was harsh with the Pharisees; he called them snakes and hypocrites, and these were supposedly the most important leaders of the day. A hypocrite is someone who pretends to be something they are not. Their acts may have been good, but the hearts of the Pharisees were proud and hardened.

Did they care about the man with the withered hand? Not at all. They were just looking for a way to catch Jesus breaking the law. We have to understand that what Jesus was trying to show people is that obeying the rules is not what makes your heart right. What makes your heart right is having a relationship with the Lord, and giving him all the praise and glory in everything. When you give glory to the Lord, it keeps you in a humble position knowing that the Lord is the one who keeps you, loves you and provides for you, and you cannot do these things without Him. The Pharisees did not praise God for this amazing miracle, or give any glory to God, they just got angry. When we praise and look for ways to glorify God in everything we do, that changes the condition of our hearts.

To be clear: children should obey their parents, and obey God’s commands. However, believers are not under the law of Moses, but under grace.

Romans 6:14 (KJV)

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace.

Jesus fulfilled the law (Matthew 5:17). Pride gets in your heart when you let obeying the laws determine your identity and value. Our attempts to be “good” or righteous are like dirty rags to God (Isaiah 64:6). The only righteousness we have is a gift from Jesus Christ (Romans 5:17).

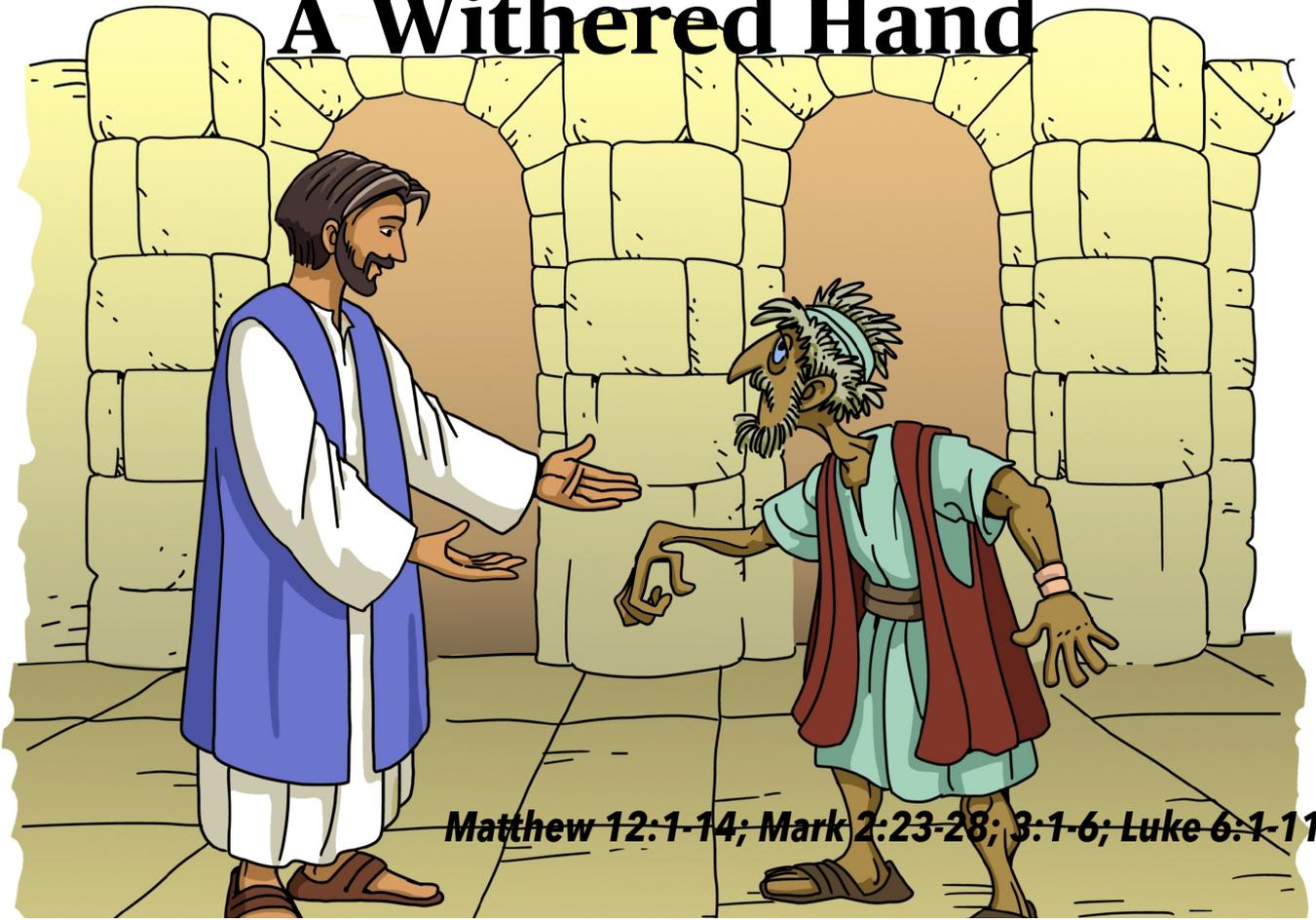
Later in that same chapter in Matthew some teachers of the law asked Jesus which was the most important commandment. This is how Jesus responded:

Mark 12:30-31 (NIV)

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”



A Withered Hand



Matthew 12:1-14; Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-6; Luke 6:1-11

MEMORY VERSE

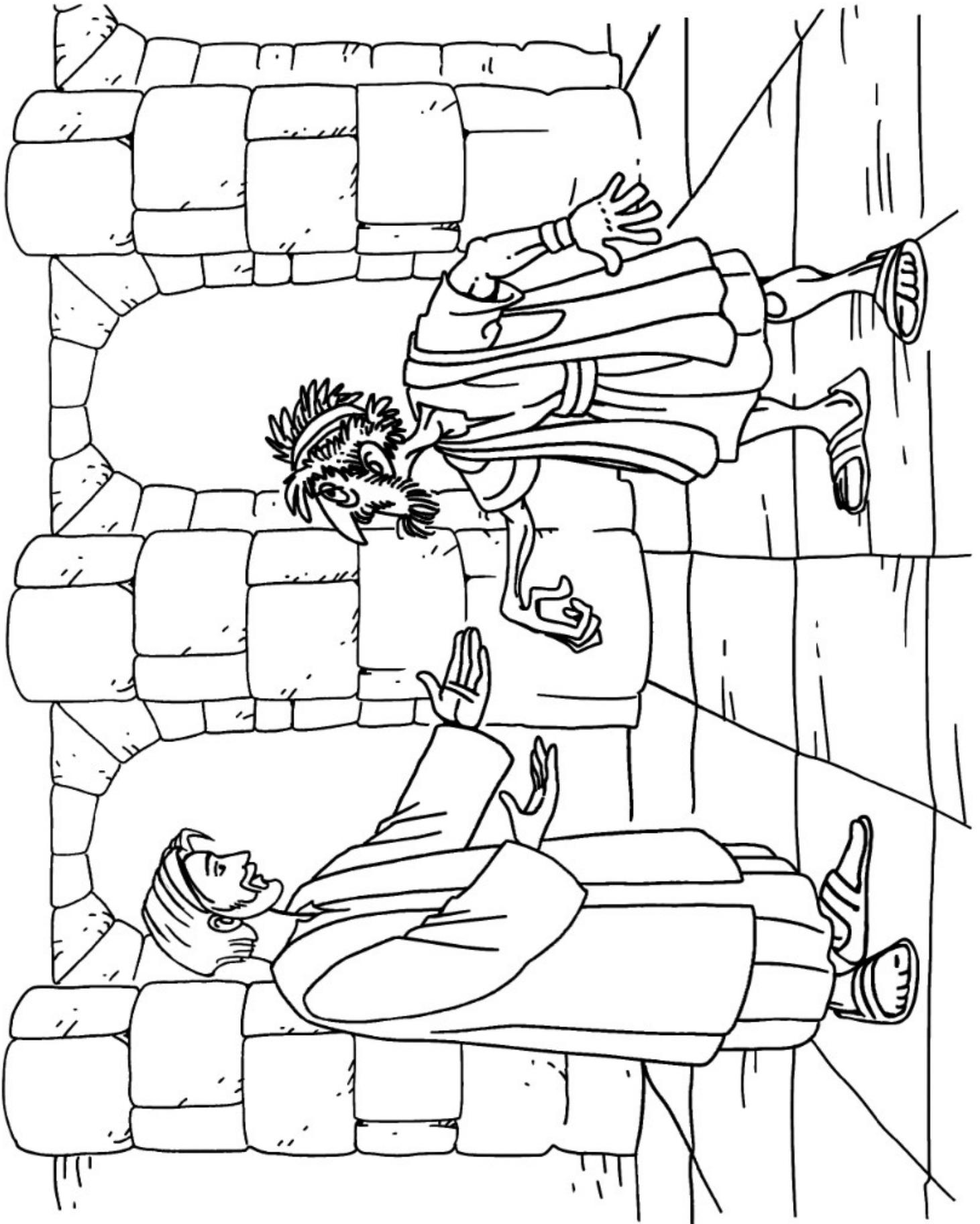
...the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.

Mark 2:27-28

Answer the Questions

Matthew 12:11-12

1. If your sheep fell into a well on the Sabbath, what would you do?
2. What does Jesus say about people compared to sheep?
3. What does Jesus say the law allows us to do on the Sabbath?





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

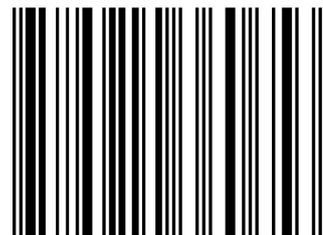
connect deeply with Scripture and find Jesus in every story of the Bible. Once her children were grown, she prayerfully developed this curriculum to speak to children across different cultures and backgrounds. In September 2024, a divine meeting with a Kenyan woman on a layover in Istanbul led to the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