

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!





MEMORY VERSE

*...You are those who justify yourselves before men,
but God knows your hearts. For what is highly
esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight
of God.*

Luke 16:15



More Than the Others

Matthew 23:1-14
Mark 12:38-44
Luke 20:45-47; 21:1-4

Life of Jesus

Most studies of this story only focus on the widow and her gift to the temple treasury. But to put the story into context, it would be good to go back a few verses as Jesus is speaking all in the same sitting. The gospel of Matthew does not mention this particular widow, but the reader can tell from the context that it is the same event where Jesus is speaking.

Jesus is speaking to his disciples, but he is speaking with a much larger audience. (Matthew 23:1; Luke 20:45) He is directing his words to his disciples, but the reader gets the impression that Jesus wants others to hear what he has to say.

Jesus begins by telling his disciples to beware of the scribes.

The scribes were a group of people who were very well studied in the Old Testament and were experts in Jewish law. They were the ones who wrote the scriptures on the scrolls. These were the learned teachers and authoritative leaders. They took care of legal matters; some of the scribes were also Pharisees, and the lawyers would have been scribes also. Overall, they were highly respected and esteemed by the Jewish people, and looked to for answers concerning the law. They were the voice of tradition; they were leaders in the temple and the community. They were thought to be very righteous.

They did not like Jesus; these were the ones who always tried to find fault with him. He threatened their way of life and turned everything that they spoke highly of upside down. They were among the very same people that sent him to the cross.

Jesus tells the disciples to beware of them because everything they do is because they want to be seen. (Matthew 23:5)

Jesus said they "sit in Moses' seat." (Matthew 23:2-3) This means they held the authority that belonged to Moses. The scribes told all the people what to do; they told them which laws and feasts to observe. But Jesus said not to follow after their works, because they say it, but they themselves do not do them.

The scribes put heavy burdens on the people of all the rules and laws that the people must follow. But they themselves will not even lift a finger to help.

The scribes loved to wear the long robes that were symbols of status and authority. It let everyone know who they were and how important they were. They wanted to be seen in these clothes.

The scribes loved greetings in the marketplace; they loved to hear people call them Rabbi, and give them titles of respect. If people recognize them in the marketplace, and call on them, then everyone there will see them and know how important they are.

The scribes loved having the best seats in the synagogues. These were the seats at the front, and everyone would see them. They also loved the upper rooms in the feasts.

These rooms would be large open areas, with upper levels that could be seen from the floor. The scribes loved having these seats so that everyone there could look up and see them sitting in the upper rooms, and see how influential they were.

Jesus said they "devour widow's houses." The scribes would cheat the widows out of their houses. According to the law of Moses, no one was to mistreat or take advantage of a widow. (Exodus 22:22) The tithes of the temple were supposed to take care of the Levites (the priests), the strangers, the fatherless, and the widows. (Deuteronomy 26:12-13) The Jewish people were supposed to make sure that the widows were taken care of and they were to leave some of the harvest from the grapes, olives, and wheat in their fields for the widows. (Deuteronomy 24:19-21)





More Than the Others

The scribes loved long prayers; they would pray loudly so everyone would hear them and see how holy they were.

These were very bold statements that Jesus made. Jesus said they were not righteous, they were proud, and they were hypocrites. **To the scribes, this was blasphemy.**

Jesus was always looking at the heart. People looked at the outward appearance and were intimidated by the scribes. But Jesus was not at all intimidated; he called them out on their motives.

Jesus was speaking in the temple when he said these things. (Mark 12:35, 38) So it is almost certain that the scribes would have heard.

Jesus sat across from the treasury and was watching the people put money in the offering.

Basically, Jesus was sitting in the temple complex across from where people were giving their offerings. This would have been a part of the temple buildings but not inside the temple itself. Women were allowed in this outer court, but not inside the temple, and the content of the story lets us know that this is a place where women were allowed.

He was watching the people walk up to the treasury, and put in their money, and the rich people put in a lot of money.

They were not hiding how much they were putting in. Jesus was watching the rich men put their money in, and based on the teaching that Jesus was giving just before this, we can guess that the rich people made sure that everyone was able to see how much they gave. They wanted everyone to know and they wanted to be seen.

A certain poor widow came up to the treasury.

This lady would have been very poor. It must have been obvious how poor she was.

Discuss: How would people have known she was poor?
Maybe they knew her? Maybe they knew she was a widow? Maybe she had lost her home?

This lady put two mites into the treasury, which made a farthing. These mite would have been the coin with the least value.

What is the smallest, least valuable coin in your currency? This would have been like two of those. It was worth very little.

Jesus always looks at things differently than everyone else. His kingdom is an upside-down kingdom. It is usually the opposite of what everyone expects.

Jesus saw her put this money in, and he called his disciples. It's like he said, come here, I want to show you something.

He said, 'Truly I tell you, that this poor widow put more in than everyone who put money in the treasury.'

Everyone else put money in out of their abundance. She gave out of her poverty all that she had, all of her money for living.

Jesus saw their motives. The rich men had plenty of money, and possibly even got it by questionable tactics; Jesus had mentioned that they took advantage of the widows. They had plenty, and put a lot of money into the treasury. They did it with a show, making sure that everyone knew how much they gave.

This story also ties in with the teachings of Jesus at the sermon on the mount:

We can summarize Matthew 6:1-4:

Do you do good works in public so that people will see you? If you do, your Father in heaven will not reward you.





More Than the Others

When you give to the needy, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues (houses of worship) and on the streets. They do it so that people will praise them; they have received their reward. Some translations say to not make a big show of it.

When you give to the poor (or help a needy person) do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.

Some translations say, do it in such a way that even your closest friend will not know about it.

Let your giving be done in secret, in private. And your Father who sees what is done in secret will Himself reward you openly.

Jesus is making an illustration; he is showing you what the leaders of the day would do. It is not clear if the Pharisees actually sounded a trumpet when they gave to the poor, or if a trumpet was sounded when they put a large amount in the offering. Some scholars have think that a trumpet may have been blown to call the needy to a place where the synagogue leaders would be giving alms, or money, to the poor. Other scholars think that Jesus was illustrating how they made a big show of how much they were giving.

Whether Jesus' words were literal or for illustration, if a big show is made of giving to others, it puts the attention on the person giving.

Jesus said that they received their reward, and that reward was that everyone would see what they had done and give them honor. The glory should go to God; not to the giver. When we do what Jesus says, if we give to the poor, but we do it secretly, and do not bring attention to ourselves or tell everyone what we did then God will see this, and HE will reward us. And the rewards that come from God are much greater than anything we could ever receive from other people.

Discuss: We can look at this as something that the people in the Bible did. But people are people, and human nature does not change. There may be things in our society, life, or culture that are similar, but they just look different and show up a little differently.

The message is still the same.

We need to always give glory to God, and not bring attention to ourselves. If we put God first, giving thanks to Him, and praising Him, it makes the temptation less to make it about us.

There was no fanfare when this widow put her money in the box. No one made a big deal about it. She might have been embarrassed as she put her two cents in and the others put in so much more. The people probably even looked at it as if it were nothing, and may have even scoffed at it. But there is a big difference between what people value, and what God values.



Jesus in the Story



Jesus fulfilled the law of Moses. This means he obeyed every one of the 613 commandments in the Mosaic law.

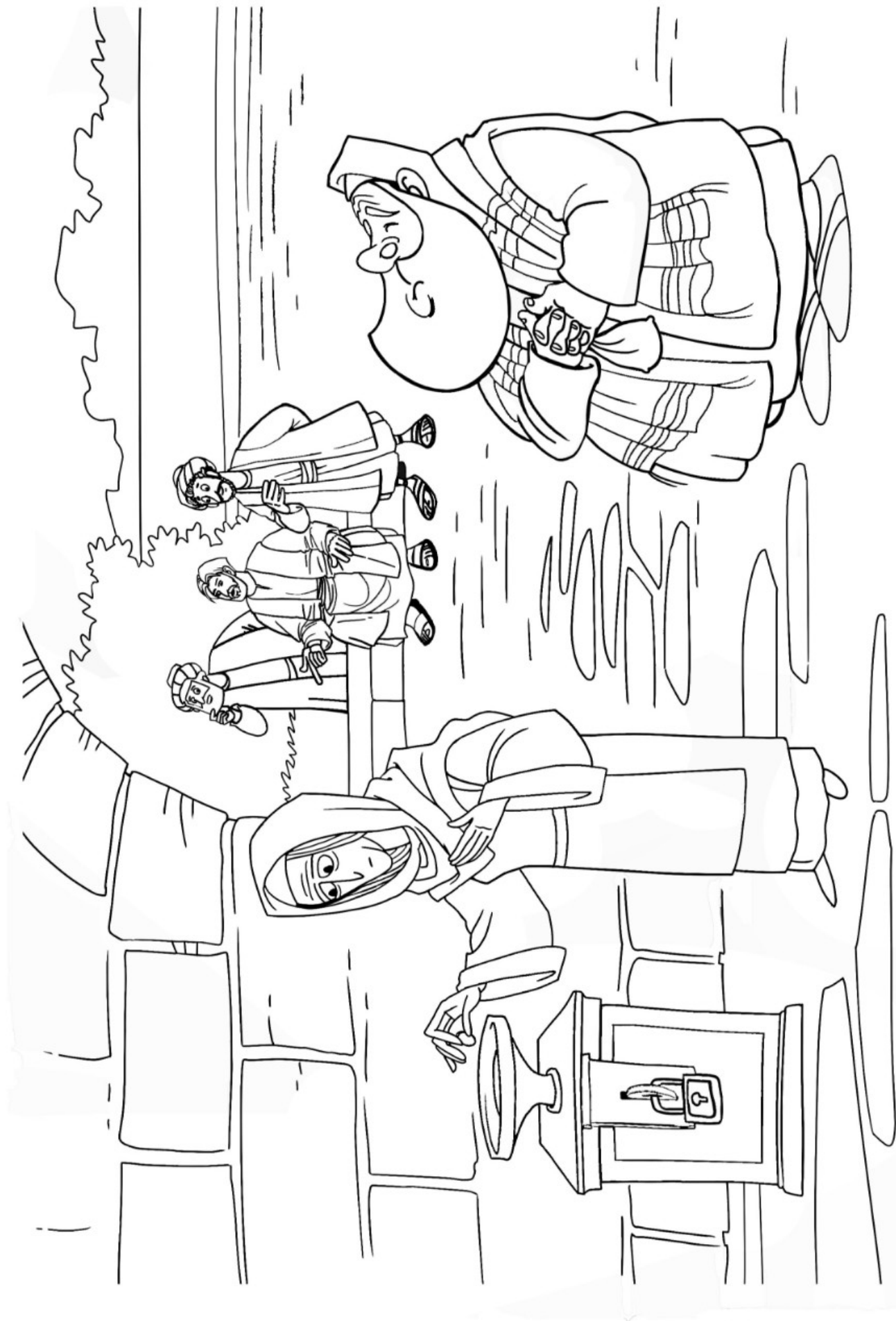
The Pharisees and scribes were studied in the law. They were experts in the rules of the law. But they did not really understand the law. They thought they understood the law better than everyone, they even made many extra rules to help them keep the law. Jesus did not obey their extra laws, nor did he observe the law the same way they did. They followed it exactly, but obeyed it “legally” but not from their hearts.

Jesus was not about just obeying the rules; he wanted them to see the purpose behind the law.

God’s purpose came down to two things: love the Lord with all your heart, and love your neighbor as yourself.

All the Old Testament laws are based on these two commandments. If the reader truly understands the commandment, one can see that by following the commandment it only testifies to show love to God, or others, or both.







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

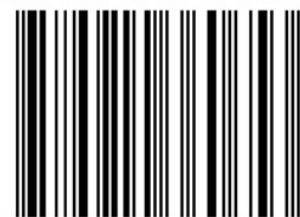
connect deeply with Scripture and find Jesus in every story of the Bible. Once her children were grown, she prayerfully developed this curriculum to speak to children across different cultures and backgrounds. In September 2024, a divine meeting with a Kenyan woman on a layover in Istanbul led to the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