

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

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Table of Contents

<i>Jesus the King</i>	5
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<i>Teaching the Lessons</i>	7
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Life & Miracles of Jesus

My Beloved Son	10
Into the Wilderness	16
A Wedding Invitation	20
A Den of Thieves	24
An Evening Visit	32
Everything I've Ever Done	38
The Nobleman's Son	46
Waiting for the Water	50
So You May Know	56
A Withered Hand	60
Finding Great Faith	66
Who Is This?	70
Set Free!	74
Only Believe	78
What Do You Have?	84
If It Is You	92
One Thing I Know	98
If You Believe	104
Giving Thanks	110
Have Mercy	114
Zacchaeus	120
Forgiven Much	124
More Than the Others	130

Parables & Teachings of Jesus

How Will You Understand?	136
City On A Hill	142

Parables & Teachings of Jesus

When You Pray	146
Into the Ditch	150
How Much More	154
On the Rock	160
Weeds in the Wheat	164
Two Kinds of Yeast	168
The Heart of Man	172
The Door	176
Who Is My Neighbor?	180
The Wicked Servant	186
The Lost Sheep	192
The Lost Coin	196
The Lost Son	200
What Fills Your Heart?	208
Workers in the Vineyard	212
The Wicked Farmers	216
Kingdom Business	220
Improperly Dressed	224

Death & Resurrection

Arrested!	228
Falsely Accused	234
When the Rooster Crows	240
Crucify Him!	248
King of the Jews	256
Empty Tomb	264

Birth of Jesus

Unable to Speak	270
A Child Is Born	276
From the East	282







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

He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

Isaiah 53:7



Crucify Him!

Matthew 27:1-2, 11-31
Mark 15:1-20
Luke 23:1-25
John 18:28-40; 19:1-16

Trial & Crucifixion

Study this story in all four gospels, combining information from all the gospels to tell the story. It is up to the teacher to choose a gospel from which to teach the story, and you may choose to teach from either Matthew or John. Be sure to include the details of Pilate's wife only told in the book of Matthew.

The entire story of the trial and crucifixion of Christ is told in multiple lessons. This lesson will focus only on the trial of Jesus before Pontius Pilate and his sentencing. Tell the story to your class and explain the context in which the events took place. This lesson will attempt to combine all four gospels into a sequential timeline, but the timing of exactly what came first is not entirely clear.

Give a brief overview of recent events.

- Triumphal entry:** Just a days before, Jesus entered Jerusalem with a triumphal entry, greeted by cheering crowds. (Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-44; John 12:12-19)
- Last Supper:** Jesus shared his last supper with his disciples in an upper room (Mark 14:15; Luke 22:12)
He shared a meal with them that we now call communion. Jesus washes the feet of the disciples, and tells of his betrayal. (John 13:1-10)
- Mount of Olives:** They left the upper room and went into the mount of Olives (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26), then into the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus is arrested.
- Trial:** Jesus is taken to the palace of the high priest where they put him on trial and find him guilty of death. He is then sent to the Roman governor to be sentenced.

This is where our lesson begins. Jesus has been accused by the priests and scribes, and tried by the high priest. He has been found guilty of death after a trial has gone on all through the night. In the morning the chief priests hold a consultation with the elders and scribes, and

Jesus is taken to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor.

In order to fully understand the situation, it is necessary to have an understanding of the government at the time of Christ. The Romans ruled over much of the civilized world at the time, and they were the ultimate authority in the land of Israel. However, they did not care to involve themselves in the particular matters of Jewish customs and laws. The Jews made their own rules regarding the religious laws and the law which Moses, the Mosaic law given to the people thousands of years before.

Even though the Jews ruled their own people through these laws, they did not have the authority to put Jesus to death. Their laws were ultimately subject to the Roman laws. Crucifixion was the punishment for Roman crimes. However, the Jews must submit to the Roman government, and therefore had to send Jesus to the Roman governor to request the death sentence for Jesus' "crimes."





Crucify Him!

All of this is taking place just before Passover. There is some debate among scholars about the exact timing of the death of Christ, and some events which changed the dates of Passover in this particular year in which Christ was crucified. It has been widely accepted that Christ was crucified on a Friday. It is clear from scripture that he rose on the first day of the week, which for the Jewish calendar would have been Sunday, as the Jews observe the sabbath on the seventh day of the week, Saturday.

However, this is disputed at times because of the claim that

Jesus would be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. (Matthew 12:40) A death on Friday would only be two nights in the grave, and discussion has been made for a crucifixion on a Thursday.

This information is for the teacher, to be shared with the students at your discretion. However, it is important to convey to the students that Jesus was crucified on Passover, as he is the scriptural fulfillment of the sacrificial lamb.

Jesus was led away from the high priest to the hall of judgment. It was early in the day, and the Jews did not go into the judgment hall on this day or they would be considered "defiled" and not be allowed to eat the Passover supper.

Since they would not come in, Pilate had to go out to them.

This was an example of the way that the Pharisees observed the Mosaic laws. Technically, they were obeying the law by not going **into** the judgment hall with Jesus. But they missed the whole point. The point of that law would be that it was defiling to bring judgment on the day of Passover. They were still placing judgment on Jesus by taking him to the judgment hall and asking Pilate to sentence him. But *legally* the Pharisees were obeying the law by not going *into* the judgment hall. Their actions defeated the whole purpose of the law in the first place, which was the heart of the commandment. It all goes back to loving your neighbor as yourself. If you loved someone and understood the meaning of loving others, you would not be placing judgment.

Pilate came out of the judgment hall and asked them what accusation they were bringing against Jesus. Passover was not observed by the Romans, so this made no difference to Pilate.

The Jews told Pilate that they would not have brought Jesus if he were not guilty. Pilate said, You take him and judge him according to your law. But the Jews responded that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death. (John 18:30-31) There is some debate as exactly what this meant. Some scholars believe that they wanted to judge him by the Roman system because the Romans did not allow the Jews to sentence people to death. However, this is contradictory as there is evidence of stoning under Roman rule. (Acts 7:59) Other scholars believe that they were speaking of the rules of sentencing on or near Passover.

Regardless, the result was that he would fulfill the prophecies that Christ would be "lifted up" on the cross and be crucified. (John 12:32)





Crucify Him!

The Jews came to Pilate and said,

We found this man refusing to give taxes to Caesar, and saying he is Christ a King. They were lying about Jesus, and twisting his words. He told the disciples to pay taxes to Caesar. (Matthew 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25)

The chief priests and elders made many other accusations against Jesus and he answered nothing. Pilate asked him if he was going to answer. He said, They are saying many things against you. But Jesus still answered nothing, and Pilate was amazed.

Pilate went back into the judgment hall and asked Jesus,

"Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "You have said so." Jesus asked him, "Did you say this of yourself, or did others tell you this about me? "

Pilate said, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation delivered you to me; what have you done?"

Jesus tells Pilate that his kingdom is not of this world, or he would fight. **But His kingdom is not from here.**

Pilate asked him again, "Are you a king?"

Jesus said, "You say I am a king. I was born to come into the world to testify of the truth. Everyone that is of the truth hears my voice."

Pilate does not seem to understand.

He asks Jesus, "What is truth?"

Pilate goes back out to the Jews and says,

"I find no fault in this man." (Luke 23:4; John 18:38)

The people became furious. They told Pilate that Jesus stirred up all the people from Galilee to Jerusalem.

When Pilate heard that Jesus was from Galilee, he knew that Jesus would come under the jurisdiction of Herod. Herod would be the ruler of that region, and would have legal authority to make decisions regarding Jesus. So Pilate sent Jesus to Herod.

Pilate was very hesitant to make a ruling and did not want to make the final decision, as a man's life was at stake. He gladly referred Jesus to Herod, hoping that Herod would handle the situation.

Herod was very excited to see Jesus. He had heard about Jesus, and was hoping to see him do some miracles.

Discuss: How had Herod heard about Jesus?

Jesus was famous; news of Jesus had spread throughout the entire country.

Herod interrogated Jesus. He questioned him with many questions, and Jesus did not answer him one word. The chief priests and scribes stood and angrily accused Jesus. Herod and his military men mocked Jesus, and treated him with contempt.

Then they put a gorgeous robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate.





Crucify Him!

Discuss: Why do you think they put this beautiful robe on him?
Was it to mock him and act as if he were a king?

After he was taken to Herod, Jesus was brought back to Pilate. Up until this time, Pilate and Herod had been enemies; but this event brought them together and they became friends.

Pilate called all the chief priests and rulers together. He told the people, you brought this man to me,

I have examined him, and found no fault concerning the things for which you accused him. Pilate said, Neither Herod nor I found anything that he has done to be worthy of death. Pilate told them he would punish Jesus, and then release him.

It was the custom for the Roman governor to release a prisoner to the Jewish people at the feast of the Passover. The Jewish people got to choose which prisoner they wanted released. There was another man in prison at this time. His name was Barabbas, and he was in prison for starting an uprising and murdering someone during the revolt.

Pilate asked the people, Who do you want me to release to you? Barabbas? Or Jesus who is called Christ?

Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews? He said this because he knew that the chief priests had delivered him because they were envious of Jesus. But the chief priests persuaded the people to ask for the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus.

Pilate had Jesus scourged, or whipped. The soldiers put a crown of thorns on his head, and put a purple robe on him and mocked him. They said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they hit him with their hands.

He was crowned with a crown of thorns, and adorned with a regal robe. What was intended as mockery by the people essentially became the coronation ceremony for Jesus. His death and resurrection sealed his position as Lord and King.

Jesus came out wearing the robe and the crown of thorns, Pilate said, "Behold the man!"

The people all cried out, Away with this man (Jesus) ; release Barabbas! Then Pilate was still willing to release Jesus.

Again, the people cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!"

Then Pilate said, You take him and crucify him, I find no fault in him. But the Jews answered him,

"We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God."

When Pilate heard this, he was *more* afraid. Was he already afraid before this? He went back in the judgment hall.

Pilate asked Jesus, Who are you?

But Jesus gave him no answer.

Then Pilate said, Will you not speak to me? Don't you know I have the power to crucify you, and the power to release you?

Then Jesus answered. Jesus said,

"You would have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

After this, Pilate tried to release him.





Crucify Him!

The Jews told Pilate that if he released Jesus, he was not Caesar's friend. Pilate may have been concerned about his government position. They told Pilate that since Jesus made himself a king, he was speaking against Caesar.

When Pilate heard this, he sat down in the judgment seat in a place called the Pavement, in Hebrew Gabbatha.

When Pilate sat down in this judgment seat, his wife sent a message to him. She told him to "have nothing to do with that just man." She told Pilate she had suffered many things in a dream because of him.

Discuss: How did Pilate's wife hear about Jesus?

He was famous, and everyone in Jerusalem had probably heard about this.

This would have been the headline news of the day. They did not have television or radio like we do now, but news would have spread and people would have heard about this.

It was a big deal. Everyone knew who Jesus was.

Pilate's wife was saying that she knew Jesus was innocent, and was warning Pilate not to have anything to do with him.

She is the only person to speak for, and not against, Jesus during this trial.

Pilate brought Jesus out, and said,

"Behold your King!"

But the people cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him!

Pilate asked the people a **third** time, Why? What evil has he done? I found no reason to sentence him to death; I will punish him and let him go.

But the people were angry. The crowd was loud, and demanding that he be crucified. (Luke 23:22-23.

Pilate said, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests said, we have no king but Caesar.

Pilate saw that he could not convince the people, he took water and washed his hands in front of all the people.

He said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see you to it."

And the people answered, "His blood be on us, and on our children."

Wow. They do not realize what they are saying.

And Pilate, willing to please the people, sentenced him as they demanded, and released Barabbas to them. (Mark 15:15; Luke 23:24-25)

The soldiers mocked him. They bowed down to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spit on him. They took a reed, or stick, and hit him on the head, pushing the thorns into his head.

Then they took the purple robe off of him, and put his own clothes back on him, and led him away to crucify him.



Jesus in the Story



Jesus was the lamb of the Passover. He was the lamb sacrificed for our sins, the symbol of all sacrifices in the law. He was the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies; he fulfilled every commandment of the law perfectly, and was sacrificed despite his innocence.

The exchange of the guilty man, Barrabas, for the innocent Jesus, was symbolic of what Jesus was going to do on the cross. **He sacrificed his life for everyone, for all have sinned - becoming sin for us. (Romans 3:23)**

It was our weaknesses he carried and our sorrows that weighed him down. We receive forgiveness and grace as Jesus was wounded for transgressions (rebellions), and crushed for our sins. **He was beaten so we could be whole and have peace, and he was whipped so that we would receive healing.** (Isaiah 53:4-7)

He was oppressed and afflicted - they beat him and tortured him. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and did not defend himself, or say a word when the accusations were brought against him (Isaiah 53:7, Isaiah 50:6).

This is the culmination of the whole Old Testament.

This was prophesied in the garden, when God told Adam that the seed of the woman would strike the head of the serpent, and the serpent would strike his heel. This is Jesus. Satan thinks he has won, but Satan did not understand that this death was only the beginning. Through his death and resurrection Jesus was able to share his Spirit with all of his believers so that they could accomplish all that he did and more. (John 14:12)

The thorns that the ground brought forth as the result of the fall of man (Genesis 3:18) are now placed on Jesus as a crown of thorns to redeem those who put their trust in him.

This crown of thorns becomes his coronation crown.

Jesus came to give us abundant life and his sufferings provided freedom for his followers. (John 10:10)



Crucify Him!



Finding Jesus: Gospels



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

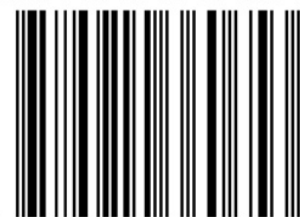
connect deeply with Scripture and find Jesus in every story of the Bible. Once her children were grown, she prayerfully developed this curriculum to speak to children across different cultures and backgrounds. In September 2024, a divine meeting with a Kenyan woman on a layover in Istanbul led to the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