

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!





The Lost Son

Luke 15:11-32

Parables of Jesus

Teaching the Lesson:

Today we will be talking about a parable. Who can tell me what a parable is? Answers could include a story with another meaning; a story told to illustrate a lesson.

This is a fairly well known parable, a story that many people may have heard.

This story opens in the book of Luke, and the first thing we see is that all the tax collectors and sinners came to listen to Jesus. What do we know about Jesus? Who does he always have around him? A lot of people! No one liked the tax collectors; they were usually dishonest people; and the sinners were looked down upon. The Pharisees and scribes were complaining that Jesus was talking to the sinners and eating with them.

The tax collectors and sinners wanted to hear Jesus. Did he send them away? Did he tell them that he wasn't talking to them? No, that's not what Jesus said at all. But that's what the Pharisees thought that Jesus should have said. They were complaining and grumbling about Jesus and saying, Why is Jesus letting these people come hear him? Why is he eating with them?

Jesus responds to the Pharisees by telling three similar parables about lost things. The first story he tells is about a man who lost one sheep. Have you heard this story? We are not going to go into detail about this story, but he told about the one lost sheep, and how the owner left all the sheep to go find the one that was lost.

The next story he tells is about a lady who has ten pieces of silver but she loses one. What does she do? She searches, she finds the one, then she has a big party.

Then Jesus tells a story about something else that is lost, and that is what this story is about.

There are three characters in this story; a certain man who had two sons.

The younger son came to his dad and said, I want you to give me the things that belong to me. When do you get things that belong to people? It is usually after they've passed away. If you have two sons, and the father passes away, then usually at that time the property and things would be divided between the sons.

I want what belongs to me. Does it belong to him yet? No. The Father is very much alive.

This story took place in Israel. If you do some research about the culture at the time, we know that what this younger son was asking was scandalous. It was an outrageous request and very insulting to the father. This was basically like saying to his father, 'I wish you were dead, just give me my stuff.'

This is not the same as just asking for something early. This was a huge insult to the father, and basically like slapping his father in the face. It was basically like telling your father to "drop dead." This would have given the son a very bad reputation if people heard what he had done to his father.

This was simply not done. But, he asked the dad for his portion of the inheritance. Did the dad say, 'NO!' and slap his son?

No, the father gave the son exactly what he asked. This was unusual, and most men at this time would not do that. If a son asked for this, most fathers would say, no, I'm not dead. This is rude, you have insulted me and shamed me, and this is wrong. But this man gave his son exactly what he asked for.

This father did not have to give it to him, but it seems like the father did it willingly. Also, there seems like it was the possibility that the other son may have received his inheritance at the same time

After his dad gave him the portion of his estate, the younger son gathered all of his things and left. He went to a far away country. Do you think he invested his money, made a lot more money, was very wise, and did well?





The Lost Son

No, he did not. He spent all his money on really stupid things. He wasted all his money with crazy living. Maybe he gambled, maybe he drank a lot, maybe he had a lot of parties. Either way, this man was not wise and he wasted all of his money. But really, whose money was it? It was really his father's because his father was still alive.

He spent every last bit of the money. Not only is he broke, but a famine came to the land. What does this mean? What is a famine?

Discuss this: This is a time when it does not rain, and there is not enough food. The crops die, then the animals cannot eat, and many of the animals die because they don't have enough food or water. Any food that is available is very expensive because there is not enough and everyone is hungry. Does the son have any money to buy food?

This man is a foreigner. He is a Jew, and he has gone to a far country, probably a Gentile country,, and he needs a job. In verse 15 it tells us that he "joined himself" to a person who lived in this country. This is an interesting word; if you read it in the original Greek it means "to glue, or fasten."

It seems like he found someone, maybe someone he knew, went to their house and they couldn't get him to leave. Have you ever had someone visit, and you wanted them to go home, but they just would not leave? It sounds like that is what the younger son did; stayed and was no longer welcome. He wouldn't go away, so maybe they gave him the worst job they could find. They might have even thought, he won't want to do this job so he will leave. This person sent him out in the fields to feed the pigs. It says "sent him", so we might be able to guess that he was feeding the pigs in exchange for a place to stay.

This is probably the worst job you could get. If you took this job, it was because you had no other options. You would never pick this job over any other job. It was gross, it was smelly, but that is not all.

Discuss: Do you know how the Jews felt about pigs? Pigs were unclean. Jews did not eat them, and they did not keep pigs. We can probably guess that this was a Gentile country. To the Jews, a pig was the lowest, most vile animal. It did not get any worse than a pig. Pigs roll in the mud, they rub in their food, they are filthy.

What do pigs eat? What do people give pigs to eat?

Pig food is leftovers and scraps, but not good leftovers like a bone of meat. Pigs eat the gross leftovers on the plate that no one wants to save. Pigs are fed the leftovers that you put in the trash. Pigs also eat corn husks and corncobs, things that people do not want to eat.

This man was hungry. Have you ever been really hungry? This man was so hungry that he wanted to eat the corn husks that the pigs were eating. You might think that the people he was with would offer him the scraps first. Maybe they would let him pick through the scraps before they gave them to the pigs and give him the best parts. But no one gave him even the pig's food.

Then the man "came to himself." (Luke 15:17)

Discuss: What does it mean to "come to yourself?" It means to come to your senses.

Have you ever thought, "What was I thinking?"

Or, "that was dumb, I shouldn't have done that."

So the younger son thought, "My dad has hired servants. He feeds his servants and they have plenty of bread and they have food left over, and I'm out here starving."

Discuss: Think about this. What does this little bit of information tell you about his father?

His father probably has money; he has hired servants. We also know that this son took much of the money, but his father still has plenty of money to live on and manage his estate.

His dad sounds like a generous person. It says that his father's servants have plenty of bread. Does his father give his servants just enough? No, he makes sure that they have plenty, and they have extra left over. His dad sounds like a better employer than the man with the pigs that the son is working for.





The Lost Son

The son comes up with a plan. He says, I'm going to go to my dad. I'm going to tell him I've sinned against heaven and against him, and I am no longer worthy to be called his son. I'll ask him to make me like one of his hired servants.

We do not know for sure if the man is truly sorry. Has he really recognized that he has done wrong? Does he realize this was all his fault? Or is he just looking for a way to live a little bit better life? The reader doesn't really know.

The son makes the journey back home. It might have taken him a while; we know he was in a far country, When he gets closer to his father's house, but he's still very far away, his father sees him coming.

Is it hard to recognize people when they are far away?

How did his dad see him if he was so far away? Do you think his dad was looking for him? Was he waiting for him? Was his dad hoping that he would come home? If you see someone that you know very well coming from far away, would you recognize them because you know them?

Do you think the father has been concerned about his son? Did they have phones back then? (No) Did they have a mail system like they have now? (No) Would he have known if his son was safe? Would he have known if his son was alive? Do you think maybe he was wondering if his son survived in the famine?

Do you think the father was looking every day for the son, thinking maybe today is the day that the son will come home?

The father saw the son when he was very far away, and what did the father do?

He RAN. The father is running towards the son. Is he excited to see him?

Discuss: Did the father know the reason that the son was coming home?

Did he know that the son was coming to tell his father that he was sorry?

The son could have been coming to ask the father for more money.

Does the father know WHY the son is coming back?

Does the father care why the son is coming back?

Does the father say, I want to make sure that you are sorry or first, then I will hug you?

Did he try to find these things out before he started running? Not at all.

What about us? Do we sometimes want people to apologize before we forgive them? Isn't that our attitude sometimes? Do we want someone to say they're sorry before we restore the relationship?

Did this father care if the son said he was sorry?

The father has no idea why the son is coming back, no idea what he is going to say, but yet he runs to meet him. Not only does he run, he falls on the son. He hugs him, throws his arms around his neck, and kisses him. He had no idea if the son is sorry, or why he's here, but he doesn't care.

The son starts in on the speech he prepared. He says, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. What does that mean?

What was the father's response. What did he say? Did the father give an answer to what the son said?

No. He did not answer; He say whether he agreed or disagreed; he simply did not respond at all to what the son said. This does not seem to matter to the father. He just seems so happy to have his son back.

Instead the father begins speaking to the servants. He tells the servants to go get the best robe, and put it on the son. He tells them to get a ring and put it on his hand and put shoes on his feet.





The Lost Son

Do you think this man stank? It might have been a while since he had a bath or a shower? Did he have nice clothes? Did he smell like stinky pigs? There's been a famine; there's a good chance he did not have water to take a shower. He was probably really dirty. But the father did not care.

Bring the best robe, and put it on him.

The robe symbolized honor and status. This made the son part of the family again, and took away the shame that he had from what he had done. Doing this in front of the servants made it clear to everyone that his past was forgotten and his original place in the family is now completely restored.

Put the ring on him.

What does the ring symbolize? He's mine. It symbolizes that he belongs. He's part of the family.

If you wear a wedding ring, it means you belong to someone. This younger son belongs. This ring most likely would have had a seal on it, and the father was giving the son the authority to conduct business for the family by giving him this ring.

Put shoes on his feet.

Servants usually went barefoot. It is likely that this man was barefoot because he had been a servant, he was feeding pigs. Shoes symbolized that he was a member of the family and NOT a servant as he had come home prepared to be.

Then the father said, Bring the fatted calf.

Where did this man get a fat cow? Everyone else has starving animals because of the famine, but he has a fat cow. Apparently he did not run out of food during the famine; he planned ahead. His cows had plenty to eat, and he had them fattened and ready to eat.

Let's have a party! My son was dead, and he is alive again. He was lost and now he is found.

How many people will a fatted calf feed? You can feed a lot of people with a calf.

The father told them to get ready and have a party. Normally this son would not have been accepted back. He would have been shamed, everyone would have known what he had done. But the father wanted everyone to know that the son returned, and he is now accepted back into the family.

It could have made the father look bad because he took the son back after the son had shamed him. But did the father hesitate to let the son come back? No. The father welcomed him back with a huge feast and a big party.

Maybe the father has been anticipating the moment his son would return, and he already had planned for a party if and when the son returned. It did not take them very long to throw together a big party. It must have been quite a party; there was music and dancing, and you could hear the music all the way out in the field.

Now, who is in the field?

The other son is out in the field. He has been out there working, and when he gets close to the house he hears all the music. So he calls one of the servants, and says, What's going on? What do I hear? And the servant says, Your brother came back, and your father killed the fatted calf because your brother is here safe, and we are having a party for your brother.

Did the older brother say, oh good! I'm so glad my brother is back safely! Did he run in the party to see his brother?

No. He's jealous, and he is angry. He's so upset that he refused to go to the party.

The father came out to talk to the brother. He said, come join us! We have food, we have music, we are dancing, come join the party!

The brother said, I've been working for you for years, and I've always done what you asked. You never even gave me a goat to have a party with my friends. He's saying this isn't fair.





The Lost Son

Then he puts it back on the father. He says, as soon as "your son" came home, the son who wasted all YOUR money on bad things, you killed the fatted calf and celebrated. The older brother seemed to know what his younger brother spent money on but we don't know if he's guessing, or if there were rumors about what the younger son had done.

Then the father said to the older brother, you are always with me. Everything I have is yours. You can have it all. You are here all the time. It was good that we should have a party and rejoice. Then the father makes it personal for the older brother. He says, "your brother" was dead, and is alive again. He was lost, and now he is found.

The story ends, and the reader does not know if the older brother changed his mind and went to the party or not.

Jesus in the Story



The sinners and tax collectors represent the younger son, and the Pharisees represent the older brother. They are the ones who obeyed all the commandments, but they never understood the heart of the father. The story is left open ended as the Pharisees are left with the decision of whether or not they will join in the forgiveness of the father. Will they decide to come into the "party," which represents the kingdom of heaven.

The father had no regrets; he gave everything for his son. He could have asked the son to pay him back, but he did not.

Who does this father represent? He represents God. He represents our Father, who always loves us, who comes looking for us, and is waiting for us to come to him. His love is not conditional. He does not put conditions on his forgiveness; he has already forgiven us. He is waiting for us to accept his forgiveness. He wants us to come to him, open our hearts, and accept what he's already given.

Jesus died for our sins so that we can have his robe of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10). The robe that the father put on the son is the robe of righteousness that we get from Jesus when we believe on him. Jesus was perfect; he never sinned. We sin, but when we believe on Jesus, we receive this robe of righteousness which makes us pure in God's sight. God gives us this robe when we come to him and come into the kingdom. Just like the father in the story covered the sins of his lost son with the glory of his own robe,, it is the same for us when we put our faith in Jesus.





The Lost Son



MEMORY VERSE

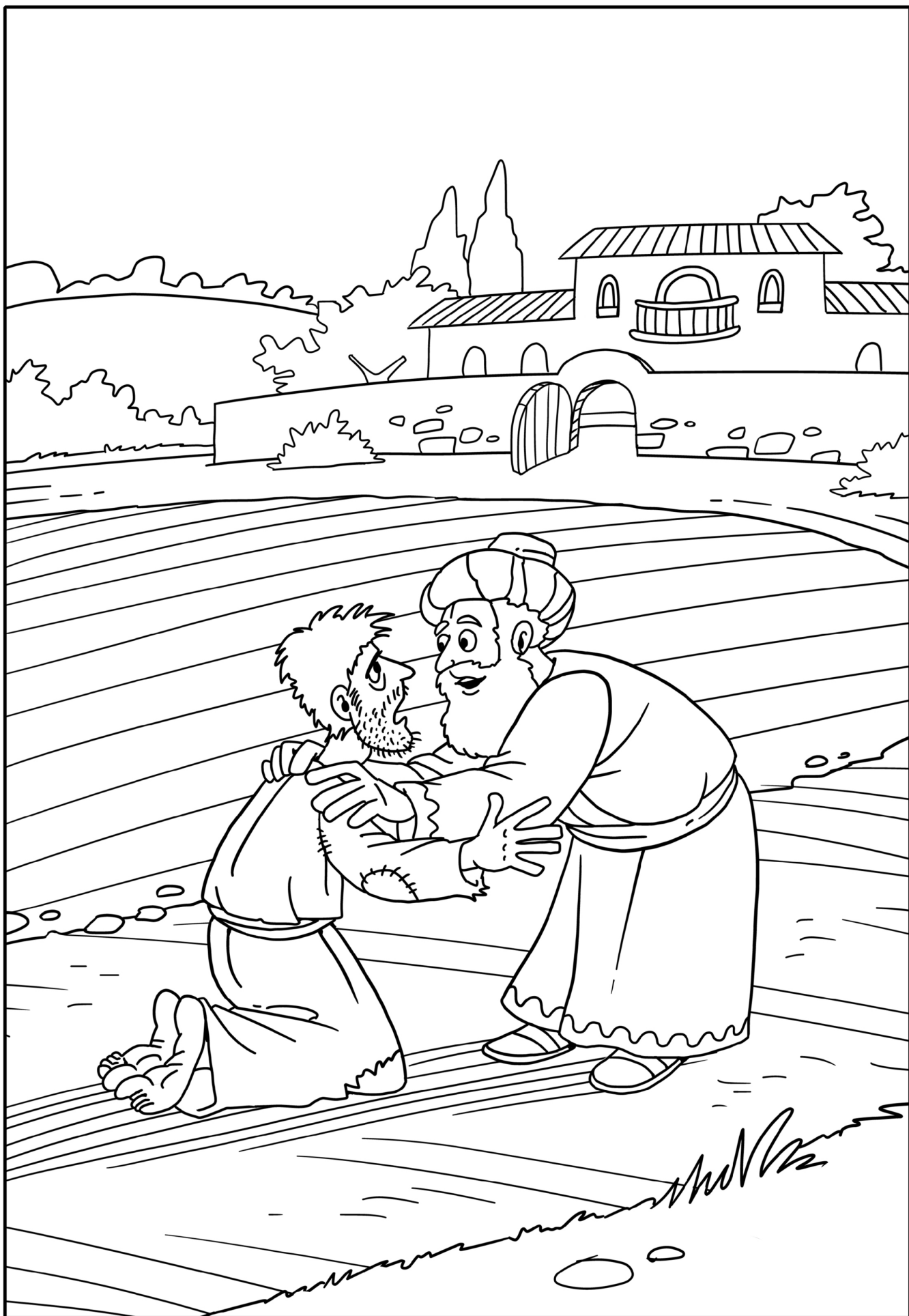
Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:7-8

Answer the Questions

Romans 8:35-39

1. What can separate us from God's love?
2. We cannot be separated from God's love by death or?
3. We cannot be separated by angels, heavenly rulers, or?
4. We cannot be separated now or?





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

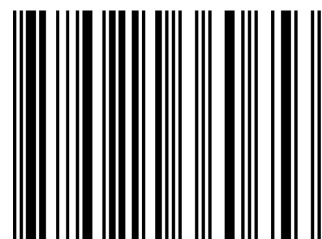
connect deeply with Scripture and find Jesus in every story of the Bible. Once her children were grown, she prayerfully developed this curriculum to speak to children across different cultures and backgrounds. In September 2024, a divine meeting with a Kenyan woman on a layover in Istanbul led to the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