2019 FUGE CAMPS
AFTER CAMP BIBLE STUDY
Intro

Life Question

How do I know Jesus was really the Son of God?

Biblical Truth

Those who are willing to accept Jesus as Lord will experience forgiveness and new life.

Scripture


Key Verses

Luke 23:46-47

Gather These Supplies

- Poster board or large sheets of paper
- Markers
- Sticky notes
- Pens
- Index cards
- Soft drink options (for the Taste Test Option)
- Cups (for the Taste Test Option)
- Permanent markers
- Tape
- Extra Bibles

Prepare Ahead of Time

- Draw four large squares on a white board, poster, or large sheet of paper. If this is on poster board or paper, hang on a focal wall. Write above the squares:

  1—The Crowds, The Jewish Leaders, The Soldiers
  2—The Rebellious Thief, The Repentant Thief
  3—The Centurion Soldier
  4—Me
• Enlist several students to conduct and video man-on-the-street interviews. Use the “Life Question” for the interviews. (Note: This is for the Older Student Interviews Option.)

• Invite some “unlikely candidates” to give their personal testimonies to your students. Include individuals who came to Christ later in life, some who came from difficult backgrounds, and some local “celebrity” types. (Note: This is for the Testimonies Option.)

• Present students with different media portrayals of the crucifixion. Use movies, websites, magazine articles, artwork, and so forth. (Note: This is for the Media Portrayals of Crucifixion Option.)

• Draw the outline of a large cross on a large sheet of paper and hang on a focal wall in the classroom.

Biblical Setting

The crowds that gathered to watch the crucifixion derided Jesus because of His claim to be God’s Messiah. One of the crucified men turned to Christ in faith and received the Lord’s gracious promise of life with Him in paradise. When the Roman centurion saw all that happened at Jesus’ crucifixion, he confessed the truth that Jesus was righteous.

Life Impact

This session is designed to lead students to decide how the gospel of Jesus impacts them by:
1. Experiencing forgiveness of personal sins; and
2. Realizing their hope of life in heaven.

The cross symbol comes from the biblical accounts of Jesus’ death on a cross. Who was Jesus? Why was He crucified? What significance does Jesus’ crucifixion have for students today? Many are undecided about what they believe regarding Jesus. In this session, they will come face to face with Jesus and the most important crossroad of their lives. They must decide whether Jesus was a delusional dreamer or is God’s Messiah as He claimed and as His early followers testified.
Engage

You Decide

Place a strip of tape in the middle of the floor or point out to students an imaginary line in the middle of the floor to form two groups. Inform students they are about to play the game, You Decide? Explain that you will give two options and they must make a decision on the option they prefer and move to the side of the room you designate for that option.

Beach – Mountains?
Cake – Pie?
English – Math?
Play a sport – Be a spectator?
Shoes – Barefoot?
Vacuum – Clean bathroom?
Be invisible – Fly?
Fast food restaurant – Sit down restaurant?
Country music – Rap?
Coke – Pepsi?

Say: “Just like you had to decide on the choices given you in this activity, every person has to decide what he or she believes about Jesus. Today, we will discuss whether or not we believe Jesus is the Son of God.”

Impact


Share: The religious leaders questioned Jesus whether He was the Messiah. Hearing Jesus’ answer, the religious rulers decided to take Him to Pilate, the Roman governor. After two interrogations by Pilate and one by Herod, Pilate, though he believed Jesus was innocent of wrongdoing, yielded to the pressure of the chief priests, the leaders, and the people (Luke 23:13) and handed Jesus over to them to do with as they wanted. Religious leaders and Roman soldiers mocked Jesus and rejected Him as the King of the Jews. People still must decide what they think of Jesus, answering the question Pilate asked those demanding Jesus’ execution: “What shall I do then with Jesus, who is called Christ?” (Matt. 27:22). Either He is the Messiah, God’s anointed Son, or His claim about Himself was a lie. Jesus’ resurrection proved His claim was true because God’s raising Him from death declared He is the Son of God (Rom. 1:4).

Guide students to list the various opinions people have about Jesus specifically related to His crucifixion. Record student responses on a poster board or large sheet of paper.
SESSION 1: Gospel Impact: Forgiveness and Hope

Ask: “How can there be so many different beliefs about Jesus? How can you know the truth about Him?”

Say: “Of course, the Bible is our authoritative source for truth about Jesus.”

Remind students of all Jesus had endured up to the point of the crucifixion. Enlist a volunteer to read aloud Luke 23:33-38:

33 When they arrived at the place called The Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals, one on the right and one on the left.

35 The people stood watching, and even the leaders were scoffing: “He saved others; let him save himself if this is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One!”
36 The soldiers also mocked him. They came offering him sour wine
37 and said, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!”
38 An inscription was above him: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Ask: “Did most people who viewed the crucifixion seem to believe Jesus was who He said He was? How can preconceived notions about someone create a bias against them?”

Say: “The tragedy at the cross was that the Jewish leaders, the soldiers, and the people watching missed what Jesus was doing through His death.”

Distribute four sticky notes and a pen to each student. Call for students to record a description of the crowd, the leaders, and the soldiers’ responses to Jesus on the first sticky note. Point to the grid with the four squares you prepared before the session. Lead students to place their sticky notes on the square labeled, “The Crowd, The Leaders, The Soldiers.” Discuss responses as they are placed around the first square.

Say: “Today, people must still decide what they think of Jesus and the nature of His work through the crucifixion. You must decide what you believe about Jesus.” Distribute an index card to each student. Instruct them to make note of what they believe about Jesus (as many things as they choose to list).

Option: Taste Test (Younger Students)
Direct students to tables where you have placed two popular soft drinks similar in taste and color. On one table, make the drink something the students will recognize easily. Ask students to determine which soft drink they prefer. On the second table, disguise the soft drinks so students have no idea what they are sampling. Again, ask students to determine which soft drink they prefer. Help students to see that the way they approach something can affect the end result. Say: “We all have preconceived notions about certain things in this life. It is difficult for us to set aside our biases and keep an open mind about new facts and information.” Relate this to keeping an open mind about Jesus.

Option: Interviews (Older Students)
View the video of man-on-the-street interviews and discuss the individual responses. Ask: “With which individual do you most agree?”

LUKE 23:46-47

SUMMER 2019

Call on a volunteer to read aloud Luke 23:39-43: 39 Then one of the criminals hanging there began to yell insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” 40 But the other answered, rebuking him: “Don’t you even fear God, since you are undergoing the same punishment? 41 We are punished justly, because we’re getting back what we deserve for the things we did, but this man has done nothing wrong.” 42 Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” 43 And he said to him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

*Share*: Something happened in the heart and mind of one of the two criminals crucified on either side of Jesus. This man acknowledged personal guilt and declared his conclusion that Jesus had done nothing wrong. In simple faith he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” This request shows the man believed his spirit would continue to live after physical death and that Jesus could bring him into His kingdom, meaning to save him. Jesus graciously responded to the man’s dying request by promising immediate salvation. Jesus’ promise to the crucified criminal is for all who come in faith to Him even if they come in the last hours of their lives. As long as a person lives, Christ’s invitation to come to Him stands open. To receive life with Christ in His kingdom, we must recognize our personal guilt and that we have no hope of a blessed life after death apart from God’s grace through Jesus. He saves all who turn in faith to Him.

*Say*: “Just talking about Jesus might help us discover what we believe about Him, but it is only in talking to Jesus with an open heart that we can receive the everlasting benefits from His death on the cross. An unlikely person to do this was one of the two thieves crucified beside Jesus.”

*Ask*: “What were the different responses the thieves had to Jesus?” Guide students to record the thieves’ responses on their second sticky note and place them in the second square labeled, “The Rebellious Thief and The Repentant Thief.”

*Ask*: “What did the first thief fail to see?” (Jesus was saving mankind and could have saved him too.) “Why does the second thief’s request seem outrageous?”

*Say*: “The second thief was dying, and he had no time left to serve God, yet Jesus willingly accepted the criminal’s plea for grace. Even those who repent and turn to Jesus in the last hours of their lives will be with Jesus in heaven. It’s never too late.” Explain that we are all unlikely candidates, yet the invitation to come to Christ is always open.

*Ask*: “What are the benefits we receive from Christ’s death on the cross? How does a person receive those benefits?”

*Say*: “The repentant thief gives a pattern to follow. We have to acknowledge our sins, recognize our personal guilt, and understand we have no hope apart from the grace offered to us through Jesus.”

*Option: Testimonies*  
Ask those people you invited to share their testimonies at this time.

**Share:** No one took Jesus’ life; He gave it voluntarily. Jesus, God’s eternal Son, ended His life on earth by offering Himself “through the eternal Spirit” without blemish to God (Heb. 9:14). Jesus expressed His deep trust in God even as He experienced unimaginable physical and emotional pain while enduring God’s judgment for our sins, not His own. Great suffering and great faith often merge. Jesus’ faith is a model for all believers. We need not fear to follow His steps. The centurion and his soldiers had seen many men die but none as Jesus died. The centurion was enlightened by the Holy Spirit regarding Jesus’ true identity. The centurion’s response and statement shows that any person can come to faith in Christ, even the most unlikely person. This Roman soldier’s response reminds us that no matter how Jesus is ridiculed today, people can turn from the darkness of sin and acknowledge Jesus as God’s righteous Son.

Ask: “How do you know you really belong to your parents? How do you know they love you? If your parents are currently married, how do you know they are really married?”

Discuss the “convincing proof” students have in answer to these questions. If easily accessible, bring copies of your marriage license, yours or your child’s birth certificate, and so forth. If you are married, show your wedding ring. Say: “You are basing your belief in these things because you have seen and experienced them. A Roman soldier at the cross began glorifying God because of what he saw and experienced.”

Enlist a youth to read aloud Luke 23:44-45:

> 44 It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three, 45 because the sun’s light failed. The curtain of the sanctuary was split down the middle.

Instruct students to share and discuss two supernatural events that occurred as Jesus neared the time of His death.

Ask: “How are these evidence that Jesus was God’s Son?”

Enlist a student to read aloud Luke 23:46: And Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.” Saying this, he breathed his last.

Say: “Jesus’ commitment of His Spirit into His Father’s hands was an expression of deep trust in God even as He experienced unimaginable pain and God’s judgment for our sins.” Explain that this final statement indicates Jesus’ death and the cross did not represent the last word.

Ask: “How do Jesus’ last words and the manner of His death convince you He was the Son of God?”

Call on a student to read aloud Luke 23:47-49: 47 When the centurion saw what happened, he began to glorify God, saying, “This man really was righteous!” 48 All the crowds that had gathered for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, went home, striking their chests. 49 But all who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Ask: “What was the centurion soldier’s response to Jesus’ crucifixion?”
Guide students to record the centurion’s response on their third sticky note and place it on the third square.

Ask: “Why did he respond this way? When you consider the cross of Christ, what is your response?”

Option: Media Portrayals
Show the different crucifixion portrayals you found.

Ask: “Which portrayals seem to be the most biblically accurate? Why are there so many varied depictions of this event?”

Say: “We don’t have the benefit of standing at the actual cross of Christ and experiencing His crucifixion, yet these portrayals give us a window into the events of the cross.” Remind students of the effect the crucifixion had on the centurion soldier and the proclamation of faith he made as a result.

Ask: “How are you affected by what you have seen? What proclamation can you make about Jesus? Is He truly God’s Son?”

Impart

What Will I Do with Jesus?

Challenge students to continue their study of the crucifixion by reading each Gospel writer’s version.

As you close, ask: “With whom do you most identify at the foot of the cross?”

Guide students to consider what they would record in the “Me” square. Invite them to record their responses on their fourth sticky note. Instruct them to place the notes on the fourth box on the board.

Point to the paper with the large outline of a cross. Give each student a marker. Direct students to record their thoughts about the crucifixion on this cross.

Say: “You can record a prayer, a statement of faith, a word of gratitude, or anything else you are feeling about Jesus Christ at this time.” As students record their thoughts, play a song that celebrates the cross of Christ.

Lead students to use the markers to draw a cross on their non-dominant hand as a reminder of what Christ did for all of us when He died on the cross.

Take down the cross and place it on the floor. Call students to make a circle around the cross. Say: “Because of Jesus’ death on the cross, we have forgiveness of our sins and the hope of eternal life with God in heaven.” Close in a prayer, thanking God for sending His Son to die on the cross.
Session 2: Alive and Worthy

Intro

Life Question

How should I react to Jesus’ resurrection?

Biblical Truth

Faith and worship are the only ways to respond to Jesus’ resurrection.

Scripture


Key Verses

Luke 24:51-52

Gather These Supplies

- Poster board or large sheets of paper
- Markers
- Paper
- Pens
- Tape

Prepare Ahead of Time

- Write these questions on a poster board or large sheet of paper and hang on a focal wall.
  - What is your response to Jesus’ recorded appearances?
  - How do you know Jesus came back to life?
  - What evidence exists from your own life that proves Jesus is alive?

Biblical Setting

Angels declared to women who visited Jesus’ tomb that He was alive, and they encouraged them to remember Jesus’ former teachings about His death and resurrection. After Jesus appeared to the Emmaus disciples, they returned to Jerusalem and reported what had happened to other disciples. Suddenly, Jesus stood among the whole group and spoke to them.

Luke 24:51-52
Life Impact

This session is designed to lead students to decide how the gospel of Jesus impacts them by:

1. Believing that Jesus is alive; and
2. Celebrating Jesus as Lord.

Perhaps you will have students who have heard Christians say Jesus rose from death and lives today, but they are not so sure of the claim about Jesus being alive, or what difference that makes to them if He in fact does live. They may ask, “Is Jesus’ bodily resurrection fiction? Is it fact? And if fact, where is the proof?” We must always look to God in prayer as we read the Bible, asking Him to help us understand the Scriptures and apply them to our lives.

Engage

Conspiracy Theories

Lead students to create a list of world events that have conspiracy theories associated with them. (For example: The assassination of President Kennedy; the landing on the moon; and so forth.)

Record student responses on a poster board or large sheet of paper. Call on students to share various theories associated with each. Allow students time to discuss these events and the conspiracy theories behind them.

Ask: “How do you know whom to believe and what is your evidence?”

At the bottom of the list, write “The Resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Guide students to reflect on the various theories associated with this event. Say: “Throughout the centuries, most scholars have agreed that Jesus lived and died, but many disagree with the fact that He came back to life.” Remind youth that in the last session they discussed the death of Jesus and were challenged to spend time considering this event. Ask: “What new insights did you uncover in your additional study?”

Ask: “What did it mean for our world that Christ had risen? How different would the world be if Jesus had not been resurrected? How would your life be different?”

Introduce the Study

Explain to students how vital evidence is in helping jurors reach a verdict in a court case. Say: “In this session, you will personally examine the evidence for Jesus’ resurrection and be given opportunity to respond to the fact that He is alive.”

Write on the board the word “Fact” above one column and the word “Fiction” above a second column. Say: “As we examine the facts of Jesus’ resurrection, catalog evidence you discover that helps you reach a verdict on the truth of this event.” Instruct students to record eyewitness accounts, statements made by Jesus, and physical evidence as presented in the Scriptures in the appropriate columns as you walk through the session.

LUKE 24:51-52

Share: Several women who had followed Jesus knew where their Master’s body was. They made their way to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared, and intending to complete the process of anointing Jesus’ body. When they arrived at the tomb, the women found the stone rolled away from the entrance. The women went in the tomb and were perplexed when they did not find Jesus’ body. Two men who were angels and dressed in dazzling clothes suddenly appeared. At first, the women were puzzled at what was not there; now they were frightened at what was there. The angels asked the women, “Why are you looking for the living among the dead?” The women at that moment probably did not fully grasp the implication of the angels’ question. Then, the angels made the startling declaration, “He is not here, but he has risen.” They also reminded the women that Jesus had told them when He was still in Galilee that He, the Son of Man, would be betrayed and crucified and also would rise on the third day. The women no doubt were overjoyed when they remembered His former teachings about His death and resurrection.

Ask students to call out things that they empty or that go empty. Examples: the dishwasher, email inbox, backpack, suitcase upon return home, gas tank, trash, glass, and so forth.

Ask: “When is it important for something to be empty? Why would an empty grave be significant? How would Jesus’ empty grave be evidence of His resurrection?”

Enlist a youth to read aloud Luke 24:1-8: 1 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared. 2 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb. 3 They went in but did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men stood by them in dazzling clothes. 5 So the women were terrified and bowed down to the ground. “Why are you looking for the living among the dead?” asked the men. 6 “He is not here, but he has risen! Remember how he spoke to you when he was still in Galilee, 7 saying, ‘It is necessary that the Son of Man be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and rise on the third day’?” 8 And they remembered his words.

Ask: “How do you think the women felt when they found the empty tomb?”

Invite students to find a partner and discuss the following:
- What is the biggest promise you have made to someone? Did you keep it?
- What is the biggest promise anyone ever made to you? Did they keep it?
- If the promise was kept, how did you feel about the person who made the promise?

Say: “The angels reminded the women of Jesus’ promise to rise from the dead.”

Ask: “If Jesus kept this promise, what does that tell you about the other promises He made?”

Ask rhetorically: “What is your response to Jesus’ empty tomb?”

Discuss some alternative theories about the empty tomb. Lead a student to write on the board facts found in this Scripture passage and fiction discussed as alternative theories concerning the resurrection.
2. Exhibit B: Confirm Jesus Lives (Luke 24:36-40)

Share: Jesus made many appearances during the 40 days between His resurrection and ascension. He appeared to Mary Magdalene (and other women) at the tomb (Matt. 28:9-10; Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18); to some disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32); to Peter (v. 34); to 10 of the 11 disciples (John 20:19-25); to the 11 disciples including Thomas (John 20:26-29); to 7 disciples by the shore of the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-23); to the 11 disciples on a mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20); to 500 at one time (1 Cor. 15:6); to James (1 Cor. 15:7); and to the apostles when He ascended into heaven (Acts 1:3-11). After Jesus’ ascension, He appeared to Paul (Acts 9:1-9; 1 Cor. 15:8). Jesus offered to have the disciples touch Him to prove He was not a ghost since a ghost does not have flesh and bones as He obviously had. We cannot know the exact nature of Jesus’ resurrected body. It’s a mystery to us. Jesus’ statement regarding His flesh and bones indicates His bodily resurrection, that His body had physical aspects. He was not a hallucination, phantom, ghost, or a figment of their combined imaginations. Jesus appeared to them in a real body.

Invite students to find a different partner and discuss the following:

- In your own life, whose death has affected you the most?
- What would it be like to see this person again?

Lead students to discuss how the disciples must have felt after the death of Jesus. Call on a volunteer to read aloud Luke 24:36-40:

36 As they were saying these things, he himself stood in their midst. He said to them, “Peace to you!” 37 But they were startled and terrified and thought they were seeing a ghost. 38 “Why are you troubled?” he asked them. “And why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself! Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have.” 40 Having said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

Ask: “How would a physical appearance by Jesus be evidence of His resurrection? Why did the disciples have such a hard time believing Jesus was alive? Why was it necessary for the disciples to see that Jesus was not a ghost? How did He prove Himself to them?”

Tell students to find another partner and discuss the following questions you have written and hung on the wall before the session:

- What is your response to Jesus’ recorded appearances?
- How do you know Jesus came back to life?
- What evidence exists from your own life that proves Jesus is alive?

Instruct a student to record eyewitness accounts, statements made by Jesus, and physical evidence as presented in this Scripture passage in the appropriate “Fact” or “Fiction” columns on the grid on the board.
3. Exhibit C: Believe Scripture’s Testimony (Luke 24:44-47)

Share: Jesus stressed that everything written about Him in the Scripture must be fulfilled. In making such widespread predictions of Jesus, the Old Testament is a Christian book from beginning to end. Jesus is the key to the Holy Scriptures, all of which bear witness to Him. Moreover, Jesus’ pointing out to the disciples Old Testament texts about Himself shows that God’s purpose has always been to declare the good news of His salvation to all nations. How could Jesus’ disciples grasp these wonderful truths? Luke wrote, “Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.” The Holy Spirit, whom Jesus called “the Spirit of truth” (John 14:17) and who inspired the writers of the sacred texts (2 Pet. 1:20-21), is present today to open our minds to understand all that is written in God’s Word, both the Old and New Testaments.

Help students understand that even after touching Jesus’ crucifixion wounds, the disciples still struggled with the fact He was alive. Say: “If Jesus’ own disciples struggled with His resurrection, we should not be surprised when people struggle with this fact today.”

Enlist a volunteer to read aloud Luke 24:44-47:

44 He told them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”
45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. 46 He also said to them, “This is what is written: The Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead the third day, and repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in his name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

Ask: “How did Scripture help the disciples understand? Why was it critical for Jesus to open their minds to what He was telling them? How can Scripture provide evidence of Jesus’ resurrection today?”

Instruct students to get in groups of 3-4 to find additional examples of Scriptures that help them further understand the resurrection of Jesus.

Lead a student to write facts found in this Scripture passage and fiction discussed as alternative theories concerning the resurrection on the board.

My Response to the Evidence

Ask: “What evidence have you discovered today about Jesus’ resurrection?” Discuss what they already knew and what was new information. Refer to the grid of facts and fiction on the board. Challenge students to continue to gather evidence of Jesus’ resurrection after the session.

Distribute paper and pens to students. Instruct them to write the word, “risen” at the top of one side of the paper and “victory” at the top of the other side.
Instruct students to answer this question on the “risen” side: “How should you react to Jesus’ resurrection?”

Instruct students to answer this question on the “victory” side: “What difference does the resurrection of Jesus make in how you live your life?”

Read aloud Luke 24:51-52: 51 And while he was blessing them, he left them and was carried up into heaven. 52 After worshiping him, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

Ask: “What response did the disciples have to Jesus’ resurrection?” Say: “It is a joy to be able to celebrate Jesus as the risen Lord.”

Ask: “Why does His resurrection need to be celebrated? How will you celebrate Jesus’ resurrection today? How will you continue to celebrate?”

Close the session in worship. Play a song about the resurrection. At the end of the song, encourage students to express their praise with shouts and applause. Invite them to speak their gratitude for God sending Jesus and for Jesus dying and overcoming the grave so we can have a relationship and eternal life with God. Pray to end this time.
Intro

Life Question

How do I know that the message of Christians is true?

Biblical Truth

Christians’ witness is confirmed by Jesus’ commissioning, the filling of the Spirit, and alignment with Scripture.

Scripture

Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-4,12-17

Key Verses

Acts 2:16-17

Gather These Supplies

- Poster board or large sheets of paper
- Magazines and newspapers
- Blow dryer
- Paper
- Pens
- Extra Bibles

Prepare Ahead of Time

- Enlist students to present testimonials about their favorite products. These can be simple: a soft drink or food item, a certain video game, a particular television show or movie, and so forth.
SESSION 3: Gospel Impact: Witness

• Write these stats on two poster boards or large sheets of paper and hang on a focal wall:
  o 11,741 people groups representing 7.4 billion people
  o 7,034 unreached people groups representing 4.3 billion people
  o 3,179 unengaged, unreached people groups representing 223 million people [Source: http://www.peoplegroups.org/]
  o At least 1.5 billion people do not have the full Bible available in their first language. Over 684 million of these have the New Testament; others have portions or at least some level of translation or preparatory work begun. [Source: http://www.wycliffe.net/statistics]

• Write these questions on poster board or a large sheet of paper on post on a focal wall:
  o How many people have you told about Jesus?
  o Where do you feel called to be Christ’s witness?
  o What holds you back from testifying about Him?
  o How do you need the Spirit to help you?

Biblical Setting

The risen Christ told His disciples they soon would be baptized with the Holy Spirit, who would empower them to be His witnesses. When the Jewish hearers heard the good news in their own languages, they were amazed and confused. Peter then used the Scriptures to explain the phenomenon.

Life Impact

This session is designed to lead students to decide how the gospel of Jesus impacts them by:
  1. Determining if the witness of Christians is true; and
  2. Realizing their witness as Christians is credible and powerful.

This session will help people decide whether the Christian witness is true. It will provide information to help believers know their witness is credible. Being commissioned by the living Christ, Jesus’ followers spoke truths inspired by God’s Holy Spirit and confirmed by the written Scriptures. Those same truths find affirmation by the Bible and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of every believer.
Product Testimonials

Invite students to present their testimonials, one at a time. Encourage “spokespeople” to be excited about their products and to convince other students to want to buy or use them. After students have heard about the products, ask: “Did you believe what the spokespeople were telling you about their products? How did you know if what they were saying was true? Based on their testimony, would you use or buy their product?”

Say: “Our spokespeople were giving testimonies about products they believe in. At an even greater and more important level, witnesses in a court give testimony about what they believe to be the facts in a case.”

Introduce the Study
Say: “Last week, you were challenged to read about further eyewitness accounts to Jesus’ resurrection.” Ask: “Are their stories believable?” Discuss how students know the testimonies they studied are true.

Say: “Today, we will dig deeper into the believability of those who share the message of Jesus Christ. We will consider the questions: How can we know the message of Christians is true? and How can others trust that what I am saying is true?”

Option: Infomercials
Paid product advertisements on television are called “infomercials.” Invite students to describe some of the infomercials they have seen. Discuss the testimonials on these advertisements. Help students understand that they are involved often in the process of evaluating the “witness” of others.

Ask: “Do you believe what these people are telling you? How do you decide who is believable and who is not? Are you inclined to buy their product based on the power of their words and their actions?”

Impact

1. Commissioned by Jesus (Acts 1:4-8)

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would direct and empower His followers to fulfill the ministry He earlier had mentioned during one of multiple appearances after His resurrection. He told them to go in His authority “and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything” He had “commanded” them (Matt. 28:19-20).
He also promised to be with them. From this powerful instruction that Jesus gave in His last communication to His disciples before His ascension, we learn several truths about our responsibilities and opportunities. (1) The Lord Jesus Christ expects all believers to be positive witnesses for Him. Being witnesses for Christ is not optional. (2) We do not have to fear talking to others about our faith in Jesus. (3) As Jesus’ followers, we are not to limit our witness for Him to a place or a particular group of people. We are to be His witnesses at all times, in all places, to all people He brings into our lives and to our attention.

Divide students into teams and give each team magazines and newspapers. Say: “Look through your magazines and newspapers for images of people. For each image, determine what you believe this person’s life is about—what he or she represents to the world or how he or she might live.” Instruct teams to find three examples to share. Call on each team to present their findings.

Ask: “How did you determine what you believe about the people in your images?” Say: “Your life testifies about what you believe and what you stand for.” Explain that being a witness for Christ is not an option for believers. Say: “The issue is not whether you are a witness, but rather, what kind of a witness you will be. Jesus has commissioned (or called) all believers to live lives that testify about Him.”

Read aloud Acts 1:4-8: 4 While he was with them, he commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the Father’s promise. “Which,” he said, “you have heard me speak about; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit in a few days.” 6 So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?” 7 He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Say: “Jesus commissioned His disciples to take the message of God’s salvation to the world.” Explain that Jesus promised they would be empowered for the task by the Holy Spirit. Say: “This calling would verify the integrity of their words and their works on His behalf—Acts 1:8 is the task of all Christians.” Help students understand that our calling today has the same credibility and authority.

Ask for a show of hands for students who have served locally and then for those who have served internationally.

Draw attention to the statistics you printed and hung on a focal wall. Share these with students.

- 11,741 people groups representing 7.4 billion people
- 7,034 unreached people groups representing 4.3 billion people
- 3,179 unengaged, unreached people groups representing 223 million people
  [Source: http://www.peoplegroups.org/]
- At least 1.5 billion people do not have the full Bible available in their first language. Over 684 million of these have the New Testament; others have portions or at least some level of translation or preparatory work begun.
  [Source: http://www.wycliffe.net/statistics]
Ask: “What are your reactions to these statistics? Have the witnesses of Jesus continued to carry out His commission? What are you doing to carry out this call?”

Say: “Every believer is to find a way to help make the gospel known.” Ask: “What are three ways we can be involved with this?” Discuss praying, giving and going as the three levels of involvement.

2. Filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:1-4)

On the day of Pentecost, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit. The believers were all together. “All” probably includes the “120” (Acts 1:15) as well as “the Eleven” (Acts 2:14). “With one accord” or “together” does not mean they all thought and felt the same way about everything; but they were willing to set aside personal feelings and commit themselves to one task—in this case, waiting for the Father’s promise (Acts 1:4), the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit came from heaven in a powerful, multisensory way so that His coming could not be mistaken or ignored. This awesome experience reminds us that all believers can be filled with the Holy Spirit, who will enable them to testify to what God has done in Jesus. All believers receive the one-time baptism of the Spirit, but being filled with the Spirit is a repeated experience (Acts 4:8,31; 6:5). It is commanded of those who understand the Lord’s will (Eph. 5:15,18). The Holy Spirit motivates, guides, and gives us the power to be effective witnesses for Jesus.

Show students an unplugged blow dryer and tell them you cannot get it to work. Students will tell you it needs to be plugged in. Gently and with great humor, plug the blow dryer into your nostrils. Say: “It still doesn’t work.” Students will tell you the blow dryer needs to be plugged into an electrical outlet. Proceed to plug in the blow dryer correctly and use it as intended. Say: “The blow dryer didn’t work until it was plugged in to a source of electricity. As believers, we’ve been given a power source to enable us to be bold witnesses in our world.”

Call on a volunteer to read aloud Acts 2:1-4: 1When the day of Pentecost had arrived, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like that of a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were staying. 3 They saw tongues like flames of fire that separated and rested on each one of them. 4 Then they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them.

Say: “From this point on, the coming of the Holy Spirit became a normal part of becoming a Christian.” Explain that the gift of the Spirit signals we have been empowered to testify about Jesus. Point out that when the Spirit came, He empowered the disciples to make Christ known. In fact, He even miraculously empowered them to communicate the gospel across language barriers. While God may not equip you to communicate the gospel in a language you have never heard before, He certainly will empower you with words to say to communicate the gospel to those around you if you allow the Spirit freedom to work in your life.

Say: “When we are filled with the Spirit, we can testify to the truth of what God has done in Jesus.” Call on students to give an example of when they believe God was speaking through them.
3. Confirmed by Scripture (Acts 2:12-17)

The Spirit-filled disciples must have moved out of the house into the crowded streets of the city. When the Jews from as many as fourteen nations heard the good news in their own languages, they were astounded and perplexed. Some asked what it could mean. People will not always understand the Christian message. Some will be confused by it; others will mock and ridicule both the message and the messengers. Don’t be surprised that some people reject the spiritual truth you share and attempt to find only secular explanations for Christian experience and testimony. Standing with the Eleven, Peter raised his voice. Speaking on behalf of the other disciples in the power of the Holy Spirit, he boldly called for attention. Consider the contrast of this boldness to his cowardliness at the time of Jesus’ arrest. The reason for the difference is twofold: he had met the risen Lord Jesus Christ, and he had been empowered by the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus. Peter quickly moved to use the Scriptures to explain what had happened. That he used God’s Word through the prophet Joel demonstrated that the Scriptures confirm that Jesus’ followers were genuine, true witnesses, not just wishful thinkers. We must understand that while our Christian experience is vital to our witness, it is not self-explanatory. In our testimonies, Christians should refer to the Scriptures to help explain what we have experienced.

Call on a volunteer to read aloud Acts 2:12-17: 12 They were all astounded and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” 13 But some sneered and said, “They’re drunk on new wine.” 14 Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed to them: “Fellow Jews and all you residents of Jerusalem, let me explain this to you and pay attention to my words. 15 For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it’s only nine in the morning. 16 On the contrary, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 17 And it will be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out my Spirit on all people; then your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.

Ask: “What were the different responses to the miracle of the disciples speaking in many different languages?”

Say: “The truth of the Christian witness is not invalidated by people’s response to it. The truth of the Christian witness is determined by whether it conforms to God’s Word.” Ask: “How did Peter indicate the disciples’ claims about Jesus were valid and true?” (Answer: He used Scripture.) Say: “You will know if what someone is saying about Jesus is true if it’s based on and aligns with Scripture. In the same way, others will know if what you are saying is true.”

Say: “Peter used Scripture to answer people’s questions about the miracle they had just seen. Hearing people’s questions and making a connection between them and God’s Word is a skill we need to develop. Our answers to their questions can then be confirmed by Scripture.”
Testimonies

Lead students to find a partner and discuss the following questions that you have posted on the wall:

- How many people have you told about Jesus?
- Where do you feel called to be Christ’s witness?
- What holds you back from testifying about Him?
- How do you need the Spirit to help you?

Say: “One of the ways you can be ready to share with confidence is to prepare your personal testimony.” Distribute paper and pens for students to write their testimonies. Instruct them to create three sections and label them as follows: Life before Christ, Encounter with Christ, Life since Christ. Encourage students to include Scripture throughout their testimonies.

After a few minutes, say: “This is your story. Your witness of Jesus’ work in your life is credible and powerful.”

Challenge students to share their testimonies at least once in the next week. Open the floor for any student who would like to share their testimony right now.

Close in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to lead students to an individual with whom they can share Jesus.
Intro

Life Question

What will I do with Jesus?

Biblical Truth

Jesus is our only way to salvation.

Scripture

Acts 2:22-24, 32-41

Key Verses

Acts 2:37-38

Gather These Supplies

- Poster board or large sheets of paper
- Markers
- 2 Liter diet soda
- Pens
- Mentos®
- Pitcher of water
- Dry Sponge
- Extra Bible

Prepare Ahead of Time

- Pre-enlist an individual to come into your youth Bible study with a big announcement that would greatly affect your students. Make this announcement appropriate to your group. The announcement can be true or made up.
- Check out https://www.namb.net/apologetics-blog/world-religions-overview/. Prepare a poster chart for students to complete about the views of Jesus. Include on the chart the column titles “World Religions,” “Family and Friends,” “Other,” and “Today’s Student.” Pull the world religions information from the website noted. Leave the other columns blank.
Biblical Setting

Using Old Testament Scripture, Peter testified that Jesus is the Messiah and Lord who had poured out the Spirit on the disciples. As a result, 3,000 changed their minds about Jesus, believed Him to be the Messiah, and were baptized.

Life Impact

This session is designed to lead students to decide how the gospel of Jesus impacts them by:

1. Accepting the truth that Jesus is the Savior; and
2. Allowing Jesus to change their lives.

In this unit’s studies, we have learned that the Bible clearly teaches that Jesus is God’s Messiah, Jesus’ resurrection is a proven fact, and Jesus’ followers are true witnesses. This session will help students at the crossroad of indecision about Jesus discover He is the one and only Savior and decide to trust Him and His forgiveness of their sins. The session also will help believers reaffirm their commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and determine anew to help others come to know Him.

Engage

Big Announcement

Begin this session at a leisurely pace. Play music. Serve doughnuts. At a preset time, direct the individual with the announcement to burst into the room and make the announcement. Allow students to run with this news for a while as you discuss the impact it has on them. Say: “Think about your life. What news would have great impact on you today?” (For example: Parents announce the family is moving.) Say: “At Pentecost, people heard about the good news of Jesus Christ. It had a huge impact on them.” Explain that Peter testified to his listeners that Jesus was the only way to salvation. Ask: “Why would this be big news to the crowd in Jerusalem?” Say: “In the last session, you were challenged to share your testimony at least once. You were also given additional ways to share your faith.” Call on volunteers to share their experiences. Ask: “What impact did your story have on your listeners?” Say: “For the last three sessions, you’ve heard a lot about Jesus—His life, His ministry, and His death, burial, and resurrection. This should have an impact on you.” Point out that today they will have the opportunity to accept the truth that Jesus is the Savior. Say: “You will be led to reach a decision about Jesus.”

To help students understand that the gospel should have an impact on them, present this object lesson: Take the students outside for this demonstration. Drop three candy Mentos in a 2-liter diet soda. The Mentos have a significant impact on this soft drink. Be prepared for a messy fountain! If your teaching area does not allow for this, show them an example video from online sources. (Note: Put “Mentos and Diet Coke” in the search engine and several videos will be available.)

We will always find conflicting opinions about Jesus. On one hand we have those who believe He is the divine Son of God, the Savior who died for us, rose again, represents us as our High Priest in heaven, and will someday come again to end this world as we know it and establish His eternal kingdom. On the other hand we find those who think He was a fraud. Too many witnesses had seen His miracles and too many had been blessed by them for Jesus’ enemies to claim He had done no miracles. The Jewish leaders had decided to claim Jesus did miracles by the power of the devil rather than acknowledge Him as the Messiah sent from God. All who read of those miracles in the Bible or hear someone tell of them must make a similar decision whether to believe or reject the evidence that Jesus is the Messiah. We must listen to the words Peter spoke about Jesus and the resurrection, allowing the Holy Spirit to help us grasp that message with ears of faith.

Ask: “If you had the same opportunity as Peter to share the gospel with a large crowd who did not know Jesus, what would you say?”

Say: “At this time in Acts, there were conflicting opinions about Jesus. Some thought He was a wise teacher, a good man, or a prophet. Others thought He was a great deceiver or He was crazy.”

Walk through the world religions beliefs you retrieved from the Internet link. Discuss and complete the other columns of the chart.

Ask: “Who do people think Jesus is today?”

Ask: “How can the conflicting views of Christ be settled?” Discuss each conflicting worldview about Jesus and determine how students could settle this with Scripture. As students suggest specific ideas and Scriptures, record them on the poster chart. Say: “Consider your own belief about Jesus.”

Ask: “What new conclusions have you reached about Jesus? With what facts about Jesus do you still need to come to terms? How can Scripture help you?”

Say: “Peter boldly presented the message that Jesus is the only way to salvation.” Enlist a student to read aloud Acts 2:22-24: 22 “Fellow Israelites, listen to these words: This Jesus of Nazareth was a man attested to you by God with miracles, wonders, and signs that God did among you through him, just as you yourselves know. 23 Though he was delivered up according to God’s determined plan and foreknowledge, you used lawless people to nail him to a cross and kill him. 24 God raised him up, ending the pains of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by death.”

Using Old Testament Scriptures, Peter testified that Jesus is the resurrected Messiah and Lord who poured out the Spirit on His disciples. As if the actual experience explained and verified by the witnesses were not enough, Peter proved his point by quoting from the Scriptures that were so meaningful to the Jewish people as God’s way of revealing truth and defeating the doubts Satan tries to introduce and to cultivate in the minds of God’s people. Acting as witnesses, the disciples testified of having seen and experienced the resurrected Christ. This was impressive, but the effect of the Spirit’s outpouring was even more dramatic and compelling to all Peter’s hearers. Verse 36 does not mean Jesus became Lord and Christ at the ascension or the resurrection. Rather, because Jesus is the Messiah, He was raised from the dead, and because Jesus is Lord, He ascended to God’s right hand.

Share some fact or important piece of information that you know. Look something new up on the Internet or in another source that will really be interesting to your students. Ask: “Why should you believe what I just told you?” Say: “We are accustomed to accepting the things other people tell us.”

Ask: “Who has told you something about Jesus you accept? What did they teach you? How do you know their testimony about Jesus is true?”

Say: “If believers teach and preach the Bible, they preach and teach Christ.” Ask: “Why is this statement true? How can it be verified?”

Call on a volunteer to read aloud Acts 2:32-36: 32 “God has raised this Jesus; we are all witnesses of this. 33 Therefore, since he has been exalted to the right hand of God and has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit, he has poured out what you both see and hear. 34 For it was not David who ascended into the heavens, but he himself says: The Lord declared to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand 35 until I make your enemies your footstool.’ 36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know with certainty that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

Show students a pitcher of water and a completely dried-out sponge. Ask: “What will happen if I pour water onto the sponge?” Demonstrate the results. Say: “This is a picture of what happens when you accept the testimony of those who know Jesus. You absorb this truth from them and it brings something significant into your life.” Ask: “What should the next step be?” While wringing out the sponge onto a dry surface, say: “You should pass on what you have been taught about Jesus so others can find out the truth about Him too.”
3. Commit to Follow (Acts 2:37-41)

The Holy Spirit empowered and directed Peter as he preached the gospel of Christ to the crowd. At the same time, the Holy Spirit worked in the hearts and lives of the hearers—the only way our preaching and witnessing can succeed. The Spirit caused the spoken word to pierce the hearts of many of the people. They were filled with grief, remorse, and intense spiritual conviction. Peter explained that they must each repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of their sins. On hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ and being convicted by the Holy Spirit, people can decide to turn from unbelief to faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. When people make that life-changing decision, their faith in Christ results in the eternal gift of the forgiveness of sins. When they receive Jesus, they receive the gift of the Holy Spirit who will empower them to live righteously. Therefore, believers live differently from the corrupt, sinful people around them. All who observe our lives should immediately detect a difference. This can be accomplished only by following the teachings of God’s Word under the direction of the Holy Spirit. It calls for us to fellowship, study, and worship with other believers as well as to spend time personally studying the Bible and praying each day.

Call on volunteers to describe a time when they were at a large conference for Christian students and many of the teenagers made a decision for Christ. Ask: “What was it like to see so many people come to salvation?” Say: “The combination of God’s Word and the Spirit’s work had the intended effect at Pentecost. Peter’s audience reached a verdict about Jesus almost immediately: they believed in Him. Three thousand of them accepted Jesus and were baptized in His name.”

Enlist a student to read aloud Acts 2:37-41: 37 When they heard this, they were pierced to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles: “Brothers, what should we do?” 38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” 40 With many other words he testified and strongly urged them, saying, “Be saved from this corrupt generation!” 41 So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added to them.

Lead students to discuss the importance of being baptized. Show students a wedding ring or a picture of one. Say: “This is a wedding ring. It’s a representation or symbol of the fact that a person is married. Baptism is not salvation, but it does represent the salvation that has occurred in your heart and in your life.”

Share your own baptism story. Consider inviting your pastor to class to share about baptism.
**Point of Decision**

Say: “As people are exposed to Jesus and His life and ministry, they begin to form conclusions about Him. The verdict you form about Him is the most important verdict you will ever reach because your eternal destiny relies on it.”

Discuss with students how the Holy Spirit will help them live the Christian life. Remind them of their need to be baptized also. Lead students to a point of decision. Pray with those who indicate they want to accept Jesus as their Savior.

Ask students to reflect on these questions: “Now that you have become a Christian, how do you believe Jesus wants to change your life? What part will the Holy Spirit play in this transformation?”

Lead students to turn to Romans in their Bibles and underline the verses to the Roman Road: Romans 3:10,23; 5:12; 6:23; 5:8; 10:9-10; 10:13. Encourage them to share these verses with someone who does not know Christ as Lord and Savior.

Close in prayer, leading students to commit to allow the Holy Spirit to do His work in their lives. Include a prayer of thankfulness for the salvation of yourself and your students. Challenge students to share their story of Christ’s work in their lives and the gospel.