

WHO IS JESUS?

BIBLE VERSE

Who do you say that I am?
You are the Messiah, the Son
of the living God.
(Matthew 16:15-16)

BIBLE STORY REFERENCE

Luke 9:18-21
Matthew 16:13-17
Mark 8:27-29

MAIN IDEA

As Christians we believe the Bible gives many examples to help people discover who Jesus is. Jesus is the Messiah, the special one sent by God.

OBJECTIVES

Children will

- * become familiar with stories that tell about Jesus as God's Son;
- * discover the meaning of the word *Messiah*;
- * recognize that Jesus was not the Messiah people expected;
- * be given the opportunity to explore who Jesus is to them.

FOR ALL YOUR VOLUNTEERS

Photocopy these sections for ALL your volunteers:

- * Main Idea; Objectives (page 3)
- * Bible Story (page 4)
- * Bible Background (page 4)
- * Check Your Facts (page 4)
- * Shepherd Tips (page 5)

BIBLE STORY

One day Jesus asked his disciples what the crowds were saying about him. Perhaps he wanted to know what others were saying about him, and if they realized who he was. The disciples told Jesus that many ideas were floating around. Some people thought Jesus was one of God's prophets, maybe Elijah or Jeremiah or even John the Baptist. All these prophets were dead! Many people thought that Jesus was one of these dead prophets come back to life. Then Jesus asked the disciples who they thought he was. Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Peter recognized Jesus as God's Son. (Peter also knew the difference between worshipping idols or statues and worshipping the living God.) Jesus gave Peter a blessing, and reminded him that God had given him the ability to understand the truth.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Peter "named" Jesus as the Messiah. This was not a title that Jesus took lightly. He knew "Messiah" carried heavy connotations of a powerful leader who would use righteous force to defeat evil, and that was far from the role he came to fulfill. Instead, Jesus came as a gentle king who came in love to suffer for the sake of God's people.

It is important to note that Hebrew people did not carry one definite image of Messiah. After the Hebrew monarchy failed and the Babylonian exile began (587–538 B.C.), the Israelites hoped and prayed for a deliverer who could restore their kingdom. However, there are few allusions to a "Messiah." The people were open to many possibilities of how God might answer this prayer: by God's own appearance, by one of God's angels, or by an individual chosen by God.

Peter saw in Jesus the desires and hopes of a Messiah: justice, peace, and the establishment of God's kingdom. Peter had to live into an understanding of Jesus' redefining of this concept.

CHECK YOUR FACTS

- Messiah* (translated from the Hebrew) and *Christ* (*Christos* from the Greek) are synonyms meaning "anointed one."
- Anointing refers to the ritual of pouring oil on one's head in recognition of God's call to a person to serve in a holy office. The three offices named in the Hebrew Scriptures are prophet, priest, and king. As Messiah, Jesus fulfilled all three of these offices.
- Caesarea Philippi is located 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee, at the base of Mount Hermon. It was a strong center of paganism. One landmark is a huge rock face, from which flows one of the



streams that forms the Jordan River. Statues of the gods were placed in niches on this rock face. Note Peter's affirmation that Jesus is the Son of the living God.

- ❑ Elijah, a prophet from the ninth century B.C., was from the Northern Kingdom. The most familiar story of Elijah is found in 1 Kings 18:19-40, in which there was a contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal to determine the true God. Elijah also appeared at the transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-13).
- ❑ John the Baptist was a prophet, and Jesus' cousin. He called people to turn from their sin and be baptized. John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. Jesus compared John with Elijah, and called him the greatest of the prophets. John lived a very simple lifestyle. He was beheaded by Herod.
- ❑ Jeremiah became a prophet in approximately 627 B.C., under King Josiah. In true prophet fashion, Jeremiah was a controversial figure who challenged the religious and political leaders. While he preached a message of hope, he also preached of God's judgment.

ABOUT THE CHILDREN

Younger Children

The concept of "Messiah" may be difficult for younger children, who often think that "Christ" is Jesus' last name! Help them explore this concept throughout the unit, so that they may see it as a title for Jesus.

Older Children

With older children remember to talk about the difference between our ability to recognize Jesus today and what it was like for the disciples. They had no idea what God's Son would look like, or the actual form the Messiah would take.

Mission Project

Options for mission activities are found in the Reflection Week.

SHEPHERD TIPS

(Photocopy this page for each shepherd.)

Pray each week for the children under your care.

Model the behavior you want from the children.

Assist the station leader as needed.

Make sure the children use the tools and equipment in a safe manner.



Greet the Children

Help with nametags. On each child's nametag have them write one thing that they are good at under their name. (Shepherds take note of these talents for your lists)

Thank the children for remembering to bring their offerings. Have the children place their offerings in the offering basket.

Take attendance. Note any children who are absent. Make plans to send absent children a note or card. Record names, addresses, and phone numbers of any children who are attending for the first time.

Read the **Talk Tips** in each of the station plans and support the station leader in helping the children explore the story.

Resources

Bibles

Supplies

whiteboard/dry-erase
markers or
newsprint/markers

Staff Meeting

Welcome the teachers and shepherds. If people do not know one another, ask group members to put on name tags. Introduce the participants to one another as they arrive, if necessary.

1. Opening:

Ask: Did anything unexpected happen to you yesterday or today? It doesn't have to be life changing, although it certainly can be. (Offer a personal example. Perhaps someone did something kind and unexpected for you, or your child was sick and you had to rearrange your day. Listen for responses, and acknowledge each one. Do this in pairs if you have a large group.)

Say: When we encounter unexpected events or when someone behaves in a way that surprises us, we have to adjust our thinking, reschedule our day, or sometimes even reconsider our own lives and values.

Pray: God of Mystery, in you we encounter a love that we could never have expected or envisioned. Thank you for the pleasant, unexpected encounters in our lives. Give us wisdom, strength, and grace to meet the difficult, unexpected events. Thank you for the most unexpected gift of all, your Son and our Messiah. Amen.

2. Scripture

Read Matthew 16:13-17 in unison. Then read it a second time. You may also want to read the Mark and Luke Scriptures.

Provide information from the Bible Background about the Hebrew understanding of Messiah and Jesus' new vision for Messiah.



Option: Invite a pastor to lead a study on the Old Testament vision for a Messiah, and Christ's reinterpretation of this role.

3. Respond

Discuss the following questions in groups of two or three.

How do you think Jesus felt about the general confusion over his identity?

Have you ever met Christ in an unexpected way?

Where do you see your church being faithful to Christ's example of servanthood?

Gather the groups together for a time of reporting.

4. Going Forth

Say: Although, we will not go this far with the children, the next verse of the Matthew passage is the one in which Jesus renames Peter, and gives himself a new image as the rock on which Christ's church will be built. Peter has named Christ, and now Christ names Peter. Each is given a new name, and the naming is a blessing.

In closing, we will pass a blessing to one another. Gather in a circle, and be sure you know the name of the person on your right. I will begin the blessing by giving it to the person on my right, and we will pass it around the circle. (Write the words on the whiteboard or newsprint if desired.)

"Name, may the gift of Christ's love go with you."

5. Make plans

Review the stations that will be used in this unit, and make plans as necessary.

Reflection Week

Options

Mission Project

Work on a mission project for an organization such as UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) or Church World Service. Projects such as health kits, school bags, baby kits, and so forth will help people through a crisis. For more information see:

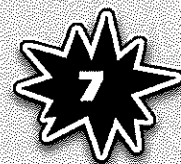
new.gbqm-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies

or

churchworldservice.org/kits/

Supplies

provide supplies according to the activities you select



Who Is Jesus?

Art

Create a gallery of the work from the Art Station and invite an adult class to visit.

Act It Out

Act out the story for a younger or older class.

Timeline

Make a "timeline" of Jesus' life. Use clip art images or Children's story Bibles to suggest possible images for the timeline. Select stories that show Christ as priest, prophet, and king.

Field Trips

If a church in your area has religious artwork, such as stained glass windows or banners or tapestries, take older children on a field trip. How does the artwork help people to understand who Jesus is?

Take a field trip around your own church. Where do you see Jesus? Where do you see others being Jesus' hands, eyes, or mouth?

Music

Do some of the activities found in the Music/Movement Station.

Note: Be sure to introduce the next unit during the reflection week activities.



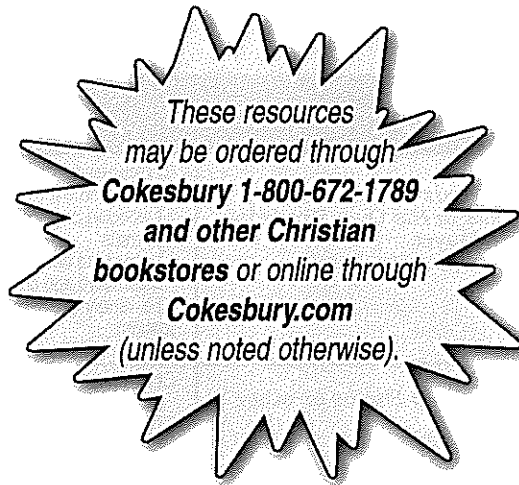
STATIONS AT A GLANCE

Stations	Focus	Preferences	Activities
Art Children will learn the Bible story through art experiences.	Station Focus: As Christians we believe the Bible gives many examples to help people discover who Jesus is. Jesus is the Messiah, the special one sent by God.	Learning preference: visual personal logical physical	Who Is Jesus? Puzzle Colors of Jesus Who Was Jesus? Let the Light Shine Triptych "I Am" Banners Light of the World
Computer Children will learn the Bible story through computer experiences.	Station Focus: As Christians we believe the Bible gives many examples to help people discover who Jesus is. Jesus is the Messiah, the special one sent by God.	Learning preference: logical independent visual verbal	Art Works Play and Learn Children's Bible Remembering the Story Interview With Jesus Galilee Flyer Walking in Their Sandals
Cooking Children will learn the Bible story through experiences with food preparation.	Station Focus: As Christians we believe the Bible gives many examples to help people discover who Jesus is. Jesus is the Messiah, the special one sent by God.	Learning preference: logical social verbal physical	Jesus, This Is Your Life! A Crown for a King Bread of Life Barley Cakes Names of Jesus: Edible Bread Dough Sculpture I Am the Vine
Game Children will play a series of learning games.	Station Focus: As Christians we believe the Bible gives many examples to help people discover who Jesus is. Jesus is the Messiah, the special one sent by God.	Learning preference: physical visual social verbal logical	Names of Jesus Bingo Images of Jesus Elijah, John the Baptist, Jeremiah, or Jesus Paper Charades
Music Children will learn the Bible story through musical experiences.	Station Focus: As Christians we believe the Bible gives many examples to help people discover who Jesus is. Jesus is the Messiah, the special one sent by God.	Learning preference: musical physical social logical	Blessed Be the Name Who? Jesus Finding Him in Hymns Ask Me Shine
Science Children will learn the Bible story through science experiences.	Station Focus: As Christians we believe the Bible gives many examples to help people discover who Jesus is. Jesus is the Messiah, the special one sent by God.	Learning preference: logical physical verbal visual social	Jesus, the Light of the World Floating Marbles Who Do You Say I Am? I Am the Way: Making a Compass Infinite Images of Christ
Storytelling Children will retell the Bible story.	Station Focus: As Christians we believe the Bible gives many examples to help people discover who Jesus is. Jesus is the Messiah, the special one sent by God.	Learning preference: verbal visual social	A Crown for a King Jesus, the Good Shepherd Who Do You Say That I Am? Snapshots of the Messiah What Did Jesus Do? Alphabet Pass Prophet, Priest, King
Video Children will hear and see the Bible story.	Station Focus: As Christians we believe the Bible gives many examples to help people discover who Jesus is. Jesus is the Messiah, the special one sent by God.	Learning preference: visual verbal social independent	The Visual Bible The Secret Garden The Miracle Worker: The Messiah as Teacher The Little Prince Images of Jesus Select Your Own Video

Resources

Plan Ahead Supplies

<p>Bibles <i>The Life of Jesus</i> by Neil Morris <i>Seeing Jesus in His Own Words</i> by Marianna Mayer Color Me Imagination Puzzle</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> pictures and sculptures of Jesus and his ministry <input type="checkbox"/> wooden or paper frames, or mats <input type="checkbox"/> newsprint and markers or chalkboard and chalk <input type="checkbox"/> a variety of paper (see station) <input type="checkbox"/> paint brushes</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> paint shirts <input type="checkbox"/> newspapers or plastic covering <input type="checkbox"/> pallets or containers <input type="checkbox"/> squirt bottles <input type="checkbox"/> small appliance box <input type="checkbox"/> glue <input type="checkbox"/> scratch knives <input type="checkbox"/> pen holder</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> black fadeless poster paper <input type="checkbox"/> oil pastels (see station) <input type="checkbox"/> candle crowns <input type="checkbox"/> tea lights <input type="checkbox"/> mallets <input type="checkbox"/> lighter <input type="checkbox"/> nails <input type="checkbox"/> Color Splash!® liquid watercolors</p>
<p>Bibles <i>Abingdon Worship Photos</i> or other photo software presentation software CDs of reflective music <i>Galilee Flyer</i> CD-ROM <i>Play and Learn Children's Bible</i> CD-ROM <i>KidPix 4</i> CD-ROM <i>Walking in Their Sandals 2.0</i> CD-ROM</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> computer with Internet access <input type="checkbox"/> printer <input type="checkbox"/> pencils and paper <input type="checkbox"/> construction paper or cardstock</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> markers <input type="checkbox"/> masking tape <input type="checkbox"/> photographs of all types of people from magazines or newspapers</p>	
<p>Bibles</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> ingredients (see station) <input type="checkbox"/> teaching pictures of Jesus from old curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> construction paper or cardstock <input type="checkbox"/> masking tape <input type="checkbox"/> posterboard <input type="checkbox"/> star-shaped cookie cutters <input type="checkbox"/> plastic knives <input type="checkbox"/> rolling pins <input type="checkbox"/> straws</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> resealable plastic sandwich bags <input type="checkbox"/> measuring spoons and cups <input type="checkbox"/> crown-shaped cookie cutters <input type="checkbox"/> paint brushes (see station) <input type="checkbox"/> plates and small cups <input type="checkbox"/> newsprint/markers or whiteboard/dry-erase marker <input type="checkbox"/> saucepan or microwave <input type="checkbox"/> mixing bowls <input type="checkbox"/> electric nonstick skillet</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> glue <input type="checkbox"/> baking sheets <input type="checkbox"/> aluminum foil and wax paper <input type="checkbox"/> timer or watch <input type="checkbox"/> disposable latex gloves <input type="checkbox"/> toothpicks <input type="checkbox"/> smocks <input type="checkbox"/> grape leaves (see station) <input type="checkbox"/> paper muffin liners <input type="checkbox"/> pastry brush or unused paint brush</p>
<p>Bibles Good News Bible children's story Bible <i>The Family Story Bible</i> by Ralph Milton <i>Symbols of Faith</i> or <i>Seasons of Faith</i> by Marcia Stoner</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> teaching pictures of Jesus from old curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> construction paper or cardstock <input type="checkbox"/> markers <input type="checkbox"/> masking tape</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> bingo markers <input type="checkbox"/> basket or bowl <input type="checkbox"/> laminating machine or clear contact paper <input type="checkbox"/> 2 paper cups <input type="checkbox"/> pitcher of water</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 flashlights <input type="checkbox"/> construction paper <input type="checkbox"/> string <input type="checkbox"/> 24 index cards</p>
<p>Who Is Jesus? CD Who Is Jesus? sheet music Who Is Jesus? lyric transparencies Bibles copies of <i>The United Methodist Hymnal</i> or another hymnal</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> CD player <input type="checkbox"/> overhead projector <input type="checkbox"/> index card <input type="checkbox"/> wall-safe adhesive</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> construction paper <input type="checkbox"/> pencils <input type="checkbox"/> assorted rhythm instruments</p>	
<p>Bible <i>The Family Story Bible</i> by Ralph Milton</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> teaching pictures of Jesus from old curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> cardstock (see station) <input type="checkbox"/> masking tape <input type="checkbox"/> index cards <input type="checkbox"/> pencils or pens <input type="checkbox"/> twine, yarn, or thin ribbon <input type="checkbox"/> plastic bags <input type="checkbox"/> sunscreen <input type="checkbox"/> UV-blocking sunglasses <input type="checkbox"/> UV color-changing beads</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> marbles or small stones <input type="checkbox"/> large plastic storage tub <input type="checkbox"/> jar with lid <input type="checkbox"/> vegetable oil <input type="checkbox"/> small paper cups <input type="checkbox"/> butcher paper <input type="checkbox"/> paintbrushes and smocks <input type="checkbox"/> cotton swabs <input type="checkbox"/> damp sponges <input type="checkbox"/> watercolor paints and/or fine point permanent markers</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 sewing needles and thread <input type="checkbox"/> 1 magnet <input type="checkbox"/> 1 wide-mouth jar <input type="checkbox"/> compass <input type="checkbox"/> symbol of Jesus <input type="checkbox"/> supplies for mirrored-tile activity (see station) <input type="checkbox"/> candle and matches <input type="checkbox"/> chalkboard/chalk or newsprint/marker</p>
<p>Bibles children's story Bible</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> teaching pictures of Jesus from old curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> construction paper or cardstock <input type="checkbox"/> markers <input type="checkbox"/> masking tape <input type="checkbox"/> index cards</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> markers or pencils <input type="checkbox"/> crown (see station) <input type="checkbox"/> blank transparencies <input type="checkbox"/> transparency pens <input type="checkbox"/> overhead projector <input type="checkbox"/> screen <input type="checkbox"/> three scrolls</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> chalkboard/chalk or whiteboard/dry-erase markers <input type="checkbox"/> Bible-times costumes <input type="checkbox"/> props</p>
<p><i>The Secret Garden</i> video children's Bible storybooks <i>The Little Prince</i> video <i>The Face: Jesus in Art</i> video <i>The Miracle Worker</i> video Sign Language resources <i>Matthew</i> or <i>The Book of Matthew</i> video</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> TV <input type="checkbox"/> DVD player <input type="checkbox"/> teaching pictures of Jesus from old curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> construction paper or cardstock <input type="checkbox"/> markers <input type="checkbox"/> masking tape</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> pictures of eyes and mouths cut from magazines <input type="checkbox"/> paper <input type="checkbox"/> pens <input type="checkbox"/> glue sticks <input type="checkbox"/> optional: VCR</p>	



Storytelling Resources

- 9780664221089 **The Family Story Bible** by Ralph Milton. Westminster John Knox Press, 1997. \$24.95
- 9780687094752 **Symbols of Faith** by Marcia Stoner. Abingdon Press, 2001. \$18.00
- 9780687037360 **Seasons of Faith** by Marcia Stoner. Abingdon Press, 2003. \$17.00

Music Resources

- 9780687327027 **Who Is Jesus? CD** \$10.50
- Who Is Jesus? sheet music**
- Who Is Jesus? lyric sheets for transparencies**

Computer Resources

For All Ages

- 705381321798 **Kid Pix Deluxe 4** (DVD-ROM). \$25.00

For Younger Children

- 9787900882912 **Play and Learn Children's Bible** (CD-ROM). Order from www.sundaysoftware.com. \$15.00

For Older Children

- 9780970206008 **Walking in Their Sandals 2.0** (CD-ROM), Sunday Software. \$32.00
- X513028 **Galilee Flyer** (CD-ROM) Sunday Software. \$25.00

- One of these:
 - Worship Image Gallery (CD-ROM), Zondervan. \$49.99
 - Abingdon Worship Photos (Volumes 1, 2, 3, or 4) CD-ROM, Abingdon, \$35; or other photo software
- Presentation software (Available at your local computer store.)

Video Resources

- The Secret Garden** (Available at your local library or video store.)
- The Book of Matthew** or **Matthew: A Dramatic Presentation of the Life of Jesus (The Visual Bible Series)** Check your church library or public library.
- 786936154924 **The Miracle Worker** (Disney version) \$14.99
- The Little Prince** (Available at your local library or video store.)
- The Face: Jesus in Art**, Kultur. Check your church library or public library.

Resources are constantly changing and going out of print. Websites are also constantly changing. Although all websites we suggest were checked at the time this unit was developed, we urge you to check the sites to verify that they are still live and that they are still appropriate for children before doing the corresponding activities.

Go to www.powerxpress.com for any updated information and alternative activities.