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**Adult
Bible Study
in
Simplified
English**

**Teaching
Guide**

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The Gospel of John:
Light Overcomes Darkness
Part One: *The Light Shines*
John 1-12
(Includes Christmas Lesson)

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Teaching Guide

The Gospel of John: *Light Overcomes Darkness* *Part One: The Light Shines (John 1-12)*

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Introduction for Teachers

The purpose of this teaching guide is to provide teachers with a plan for teaching a quality Bible lesson while helping participants improve their English language skills. Use of this material is suggested for International Sunday School classes or any Bible study group taught at a Basic English level.

The Teaching Guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Supplemental Teaching Ideas are provided under those same headings. As the teacher, you may pick and choose from these helps to use along with the student's Study Guide to fit the lesson to your class members' abilities and needs.

The Bible text printed in the lesson material is from the NEW LIFE Version of the Bible (NLV), an inexpensive translation (not a paraphrase) which uses only an 850-word vocabulary. The NLV is available from Christian Literature International, P. O. Box 777, Canby, Oregon 97013; e-mail christian@canby.com; telephone (orders only) 1-800-324-9734.

The NLV Bible often uses simplified phrases to express terms generally familiar to anyone raised in a Christian environment. In the Teaching Guide, these terms will usually be expressed using the NLV terminology, followed by the more common term in parentheses; for example, "proud religious lawkeeper (Pharisee)" or "early preacher (prophet)." The teacher has the option of using the NLV term for new Christians or beginning students, or the common term where it will be better understood and less cumbersome in teaching. Once a word or phrase has been introduced in the Word List or teaching procedures, however, the familiar expression may be used to help students add it to their vocabulary.

Prayer is sometimes specifically suggested in the teaching procedures. It should be an integral part of your lesson plan. Use your own judgment as to where it best fits into the teaching session.

The writers and editors wish you success and give you prayerful support in your teaching of this Adult Bible Study in Simplified English.

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English is published by the Baptist General Convention of Texas and follows the same curriculum plan as the Bible Study for Texas materials, but has no Texas emphasis. Teachers may wish to purchase Bible Study for Texas lesson comments and teaching guides as additional resources. These may be ordered through your church or directly from the Sunday School/Discipleship Division, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 North Washington, Dallas, TX 75246-1798, e-mail baptistway@bgct.org; FAX 214-828-5187; or toll-free telephone 1-800-355-5285.

About the Writer

*Phyllis Merritt wrote the Teacher's Guide for **The Gospel of John: Light Overcomes Darkness, Part One: The Light Shines**. She and her husband, Jack, have served as missionaries in New York, New Mexico, Georgia, and Texas. They are members and co-teachers for the International Bible Study at Columbus Avenue Baptist Church in Waco, Texas. They have two sons, Greg and Travis. Phyllis is a helper for the ESL classes in the Neighbors International Program at Columbus Avenue and has taught English as a Foreign Language nine summers in China.*

Suggestions for Teaching

General Suggestions for Teaching Simplified English Audiences

1. Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
2. Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
3. Review the Word List before beginning the study. Provide Study Guide pages for class to keep vocabulary studies in their notebooks.
4. Prepare 9-12 core sentences which tell the most important part of the Bible focal text. Illustrate each sentence with stick figures and symbols in *picture sequence* form (see details below).
5. Prepare lesson outlines or written materials before class—make your own cling sheets by cutting apart white plastic garbage bags and writing on them with markers. The plastic bags will cling to the wall.

Bible Comments/Focal Text

1. Help students hear English and practice their pronunciation by modeling phrases and sentence. Allow the entire class to repeat. Be consistent with stress and intonation. Speak naturally.
2. Allow individual students to read a sentence or paragraph at a time. For further practice, ask students to tell sections from Bible comments in their own words.
3. When time allows, pairs may read the lesson again to each other.
4. Class may close books and listen as a native speaker reads the section again.
5. Discuss lesson using “Things to Think About.”

Memory Verse

1. Challenge class members to say the Memory Verse several times each day.
2. Provide blank paper for students to write Memory Verses.
3. Write phrases or individual words on separate pieces of paper. Give to students to place in order.
4. Write entire verse on board. Read in unison. Erase key words a few at a time. Recite until entire verse is erased and class can repeat by memory.
5. Make a symbol for each word or phrase of the verse.

6. Use the symbols as a reminder for saying the verse.

Picture Sequencing (Lipson Method)

This method is especially suited for teaching beginners. It consists of a series of pictures with accompanying sentences that tell a story. It may be used solely for oral production (using pictures alone) or for integrated skills (engaging students in reading and writing the story).

You may use real pictures, videotape, pictures that are professionally drawn, or stick figures

Other benefits include the following:

1. Relaxed, low-anxiety atmosphere as students focus on the pictures and create their own sentences to tell the story
 - Focus on fluency, not just accuracy
 - Focus on a message or task rather than form or grammar
 - Minimal error-correction as students tell the story
2. Pictures (even stick figures) convey meaning in every language.
3. The same set of pictures can be used with more than one level of students by making the sentences easier or more difficult.
4. The use of pictures helps students learn the language in “chunks” rather than words in isolation.
5. The only item needed is a piece of chalk—or a marker, if using a cling sheet or overhead transparency.

Preparation

1. Put a story into sentences that are suitable for the level of your students. Try to tell the story with a maximum of ten sentences. For low beginners, choose the simplest and fewest words possible. Keep sentences in their most basic form, so students can combine sentences later.
2. Draw simple pictures or stick figures to illustrate key points in the story. These serve as prompts for the telling of the story. Other drawing tips:
 - An “x” in a small square beside a picture enables you to cue for a negative as you tell the story.
 - Direct quotations may be indicated with a cartoon-type bubble.

Suggestions for Teaching

Procedure

1. Introduce the story by following your prepared script of sentences (for consistency) and pointing to the pictures as you speak. This will give students the main idea and help them think in chunks of language (as in real-life language use).
2. Introduce the new words as you again reference the pictures. Use props and/or dramatization as needed to establish understanding. Work on individual sounds and word stress as students repeat new words.
3. Lead students in repetition of the story, one sentence at a time, working on sentence stress and intonation.
4. Lead the class in one more repetition of the story (going straight through and continuing to refer to the pictures throughout the story).
5. Ask the class to tell you the story as you cue the story sequence by pointing to the pictures. (You become "stage prompter" at this point.)
6. Then ask for a single volunteer to tell the story. (This may open the door for several more proficient students to use what they know.)
7. Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 students to give each person practice in telling the story. (Inevitably, the most eager student will go first, followed by another "semi"-eager student. By the time it is the least proficient student's turn, he/she will have learned a lot by listening, will have observed a good model at least a couple of times, and will have bolstered courage for risk-taking.)
8. Follow with questions to review story (begin by naming the setting, the characters, etc.—easy questions).
9. Conclude with life application questions that require some thought and give students opportunity to express opinion, emotion, and their own ideas.

Lesson Expansion

If the setting and circumstances permit, use these ideas:

- Sequencing pictures (a set for each pair of students) while listening to you or to a taped voice tell the story
- Picture sequencing without hearing the story told
- Matching pictures and sentences
- Scrambled sentences to arrange in order (writing numbers or letters in front of sentences to show sequence; cutting up sentences and moving around to position correct order)

- Strip story (cutting up sentences, issuing one strip per student, asking students to arrange themselves in order, having them retell the story by contributing the portion on their paper strip)
- Cloze (supplying a written copy with every nth word blank; students work in pairs to fill in the missing words)
- Dictation (teacher or student telling the story while students write what they hear)
- Provide a copy of the sentences for each student. Ask that they read the story to a partner.
- Ask students to write the story in their own words.

Bible passage as content for reading

Procedure

1. Tell the parable or story using pictures. Use animation and simple sentences.
2. Ask questions about the main idea of the story.
3. Read story aloud while students follow along and underline unknown words. Go over the meaning of these words with the whole class.
4. Intermediate or advanced students: Have students read silently a second time to look for answers to two or three questions about details that you have written on the board. Ask students to discuss their answers with a partner. Then go over answers with the whole class.
5. Beginning or low-intermediate students: Read story again and ask students to repeat it with you line by line.
6. Invite the class to read the story with you in unison.
7. Ask pairs to read the story to each other.
8. Ask for volunteers to tell the story in their own words.
9. Make drawings large enough for the back row to see.
10. Select a list of new words in the story—unfamiliar words that the students would not likely be able to figure out from context (generally 8-10 new words per lesson).
11. List the new words in categories: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs. When listing verbs, you may write both simple present and past tense forms (e.g., eat/ate, walk/walked). Basic beginners would do well to tell the story in present tense, but high beginners could work in present tense, then retell the story in past tense.

Suggestions for Teaching

Checklist for Successful Classrooms

Right Kind of Input

1. New language in every lesson
2. Input that is slightly above the students' current level of proficiency
3. Content relevant to the students' real-life needs and interests
4. Language learned in meaningful chunks, not words in isolation
5. Comprehensibility achieved by use of the following:
 - Realia or authentic materials
 - Simplified language (rephrasing, repeating, clear enunciation)
 - Demonstration and multiple examples rather than explanation
 - Lots of gestures and nonverbal language

Low Anxiety Environment

Students should not be afraid to make mistakes or take risks in language learning. The following factors contribute to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and build a sense of community:

- Personally greeting and bidding farewell to students
- Sincere and frequent affirmation
- Minimal error correction from the teacher
- Frequent reference to the culture(s) of the students
- Smiles and laughter that are commonplace
- Connecting with students through eye contact and positioning yourself on students' eye level
- Calling students by name

Checklist for Real-Life Interaction

1. Pace activities with a balance of noisy/quiet and still/active
2. Attention to different learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)
3. Variety in grouping (predominately pairs and small groups of three or five; using whole class in initial presentation and again for feedback and wrap-up at the end)
4. A focus on a task or message rather than form (grammar)
5. Provision for all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
6. Avoidance of questions for which answers are known
7. Use of information gap activity in which partners

- have different pieces of information and must ask each other questions in order to fill in their gaps of understanding
8. Other useful activities: surveys, interviews, role-play, problem-solving, and interactive games
 9. Review previous material.

Some suggestions based on material developed for the EFL Training Manual—Beyond our Borders.

Online Resources and Study Helps

- **EasyEnglish** is a form of simple English developed by Wycliffe Associates (UK). Their website: (www.easyenglish.info) contains Bible commentaries, Bible translations, Bible studies, and other materials written in simple English. They are free for you to download and use.
- Use the following free helps: Additional adult Bible study comments by Dr. Jim Denison, “Teaching Plans,” and “Teaching Resource Items” available for each lesson online at www.baptistwaypress.org.
- Additional teaching help is provided in the Internet edition of the Baptist Standard www.baptiststandard.com. Go to the website, then to Departments, then Bible Study.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 1: God Lives with Us

Lesson Focus

Jesus is the everlasting Word who became flesh and showed God to us, so that we might trust in Him and become God's children.

Focal Text

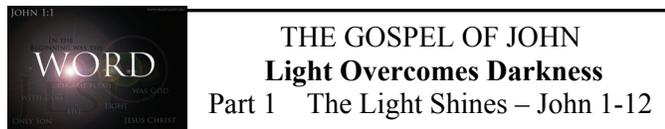
John 1:1-18

Memory Verse

"He gave the right and the power to become children of God to those who received Him. He gave this to those who put their trust in His name." (John 1:12)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare and display in the room a banner for the 13 lesson study. Use graphics as below:



- ◆ Prepare and display a preview poster for this 2 quarter study of John, Part 1 and Part 2, as below:

JOHN - LIGHT OVERCOMES DARKNESS

The Gospel of John - Part 1 Chapters 1-12 3 1/2 years	The Gospel of John - Part 2 Chapters 13-21 1 week
13 Lessons The Book of Signs The Light Shines	11 Lessons The Book of Glory The Light Overcomes

- ◆ Prepare and display this lesson's Study Outline Poster:

<p>God Lives with Us John 1:1-18</p> <p>The Word in the Beginning—John 1:1-5 Sent to Tell of the Word—John 1:6-9 The Word in the World—John 1:10-14 The Word Above All Others—John 1:15-18</p>

Connect with Life

1. Preview the study of John Part 1 and Part 2 by explaining that the Gospel of John will be studied for the next 24 lessons. Point to the banner and then ask class to look at the list of lessons in the Study Guide and read the Unit Introduction in the Study Guide.

2. Point out the importance of this study. Explain that much of the first 17 chapters of the Gospel of John are not in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, or Luke. List the following stories found only in John:

- Jesus turning water into wine at a wedding (John 2)
- Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3), where Jesus talked to him about being born again and includes perhaps the most familiar verse in all the Bible, John 3:16
- Jesus and the Samaritan woman (John 4)
- Jesus as the Good Shepherd (John 10)
- Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11)
- Jesus washing the disciples' feet (John 13)
- Jesus' words that He was going to prepare a place for His disciples (John 14)
- Jesus' prayer for His followers (John 17)
- Jesus' appearance to Thomas (John 20)
- Jesus questions Peter about whether Peter truly loved Him (John 21)

3. Say: *According to the Bible, Jesus is not simply a 30-year old man who lived 2000 years ago. He is God who came to live on earth for more than 30 years as a man 2000 years ago.* Display for the class a picture of a globe with a house on top of it, or bring a globe or map of the world and a small house.

Say: *Jesus came to earth to live with us.*

Guide the Study

4. Read from the Study Guide the paragraphs after the heading, "The Word in the Beginning."

5. Call on a volunteer to read John 1:1-5. Use the following questions to discuss the verses:

- Was there any time when Jesus did not exist?
- What is the importance that both John and Genesis begin with the words, "In the beginning?"
- What did the Word do?
- Has anything been made without the Word?
- Why did John use the terms "life" and "light" to talk about the Word?

—How did (does) the darkness respond to the light?
—Why?

6. Use the marker board and make the following chart to answer the question: *Who is Jesus?*

Jesus is God	Jesus is human
He was in the beginning The Word was God Jesus is creator. Everything came into being by Him Jesus is Light and Life He gave people the right to become children of God We have seen His glory.	He was in the world He came to His own His own did not receive Him The Word became flesh He lived among us

7. Read John 1:6-9. Explain that this John was not the same person as the one who wrote the Gospel of John. This man named John was Jesus' cousin. John the Baptist was the last of many prophets (those who were sent from God and spoke for God) telling about the coming of Christ. He told about the "true light." His reason to preach was that "through him all men might believe."

8. Describe what it means to be a witness of the light. Say, We too can say, "Jesus is the light of the world!" Discuss other ways John told his followers about Jesus.

9. Read John 1:10-14. Use the following questions for discussion:

—What did John say about Jesus in verse 10?
—If Jesus made the world, why did the world not know Him?
—What do you think to "not receive Him" means in verse 11?
—What does it mean to become a child of God?
—Why was it important for the Word to become flesh?
—What is the significance of the words "lived among us" (1:14)?
—What should we do because of what God has done for us?
—In what ways have we beheld Jesus' "shining-greatness"?

10. Read the article "Glory" in the study guide and comment that this is talking about the word "shining-greatness" in verse 14.

11. Read John 1:15-18. Point out that these verses explain that Jesus was more important than John the Baptist and the Law. Ask: *What does it mean when John says Jesus "is more important than me" (1:15)?*

—*John the Baptist was born before Jesus, but he said that Jesus lived before John. How could that be?*
—*What did Moses bring and what did Jesus bring? (The Law was given through Moses, but loving-favor and truth came through Jesus Christ.) (John 1:17)*

Encourage Application

12. Ask: *What is the promise at the end of John 1:5?* (The promise that evil cannot overcome good. It is a promise to give courage when the world seems full of evil and innocent people suffer.)

13. Invite members to tell about important things we usually do in person (marriage proposal, job interview, etc.) Ask the following questions:

—*How did God choose to reveal Himself to the world?*
—*What value did God give all people by coming in person?*

14. Use "Things to Think About" for further discussion.

15. Close in a prayer of thanksgiving that God came to live among us and destroy the darkness.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Say, *The Book of John is good for all of these: New believers to learn about their new faith; Mature Christians to learn more of Jesus through this Gospel; Older Christians to learn more of the glory of God revealed in this Gospel; Those who are dying to find comfort because Jesus brings peace, comfort, and hope; Those who have not yet believed can be led to faith.*
◆ List what we say when we introduce an important person. (Name, schools, date and place of birth, job, honors and awards, family members.) Pair class members to introduce each other using the above categories. After a few have shared, point out that John introduced Jesus to Jews and non-Jews.

Encourage Application

◆ Sing, "This Little Light of Mine," using candles in a darkened room if possible.
◆ Re-read John 1:12 as a responsive reading, with half the class reading the even numbered verses and the other half reading the odd numbered verses.
◆ Write "Jesus is Light and Life" on the marker board and close with prayer for the continued study of the Book of John to bring light to the lives of class members.

Was Jesus saying that the need of the wedding host was not important?
 What did Jesus mean when He said, “It is not time for Me to work yet?”
 What do you think verse 5 means? Does it mean that Mary understood Jesus’ response, or does it mean she tried to force His hand to (or make Him) help?

9. Ask class to underline what Mary said in verse 5, starting with “Do whatever He says.” Allow time for discussion of how the helpers obeyed Jesus. Ask: *How would our church and world be different if every follower did what Mary said?*

10. Explain the importance of water pots and the custom of purification. (Water was used to clean their hands for religious reasons.) Point out that clean hands are less important than pure hearts. Note the difference between physical and spiritual purity that John seems to suggest in this passage.

11. Read John 2:9-11. Ask members to listen for the response of “the head man.” Ask: *What meaning should we give to Jesus’ providing the best wine at the end of the celebration?* Continue with these questions:

How did the head man at the banquet respond to Jesus’ sign?

What was the usual custom that Jesus reversed?

How did Jesus manifest (show) his glory?

How did the disciples respond (act)?

What is the significance (importance) of the statement “put their trust in him” in verse 11?

Encourage Application

12. Discuss the way this lesson demonstrates how Jesus showed His power to the people, as well as how He brings fullness to our lives.

13. Point to the road signs (see step 1). Ask the following application questions:

Do you think there are people who see these road signs and simply do not believe them?

Do you think there are people who see Jesus’ signs and do not believe?

Do you think people often put more emphasis (focus) on having their material needs met rather than having their spiritual needs met?

How does John 20:30-31 help us understand this sign? What sign do (or did) you need to believe?

14. Close with prayer thanking God that Jesus had the power to change water into wine and has the power to change our lives.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Pour water from a clear pitcher into the second pitcher which has powdered purple drink mix in it (It will turn purple in color). Pour the water back into the clear pitcher to show the change in color. Explain that when Jesus changed water into wine it was a sign of His power, not a trick like this one. Ask: *What’s the difference?* (Jesus showed the people real power. He made up for what was missing.)

◆ Explain that the first 12 chapters of John are often called the Book of Signs. Explain that these signs are powerful works Jesus did that showed He was God’s Son.

Jesus turning the water into wine (2:1-11)

Jesus healing the son of the royal official (4:46-54)

Jesus healing the paraplegic (5:1-18)

Jesus feeding the 5,000 (6:1-14, 25-69)

Jesus walking on the water (6:16-21)

Jesus restoring the sight of the blind man (9:1-41)

Jesus raising Lazarus to life (11:1-44)

◆ Point out that this lesson is about Jesus’ first sign. Read John 2:1-3. List important words on a board and share a brief statement about the meaning of each word. Words might include (wedding, Cana, Galilee, mother, disciples, and wine). Say: *These words should set the stage for (or help in) studying the rest of the passage.*

Encourage Application

◆ Point out that this was not the first time water was changed as a sign of God’s work. Explain Exodus 7:14-25 (water turned to blood); Exodus 14:13-31 (dry ground in the midst of the water); and Exodus 17:1-7 (water from a rock). Discuss how Jesus gave so much wine when only a little more was needed. Say: *At a deeper level, Jesus gives us what we need spiritually.*

◆ Read and discuss “Things to Think About.”

◆ Sing, “All Hail the Power.”

◆ Suggest that even though Jesus turned the water into wine, those that drank would thirst again. Remind members of Jesus’ words in John 4:14, and then close in prayer, thanking God for the signs Jesus gives us and the abundance of His blessings.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 3: Jesus' Authority as the Son of God

Lesson Focus

When Jesus cleaned the house of God, He showed His authority as the Son of God, when He arose from the dead He proved that authority.

Focal Text

John 2:13-25

Memory Verse

“For My house will be called a house of prayer for all people.” (Isaiah 56:7)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Study Outline Poster for the lesson:

Jesus' Authority as the Son of God

John 2:13-25

What Jesus Saw — John 2:13-14

What Jesus Did — John 2:15-17

What Jesus Said — John 2:18-25

- ◆ Prepare a drawing of the layout of Herod's temple. Use a Bible dictionary, map set or picture from the internet. See: <http://www.meditationforchristians.com/sec3yrb4a.htm> for #3.

Connect with Life

1. Ask the class to imagine that when they give an offering at church, they must give it in pennies only. Ask if a volunteer has a dime. Then, tell the volunteer to give you the dime but count out only nine pennies for them to give as their offering. Ask: *Is that fair?* Say: *You need pennies for your offering and now you have pennies. What's wrong?* Discuss how this could make them angry to be taken advantage of. Explain that the lesson today is about a time when Jesus showed His authority and cleaned the house of God (return the dime to the volunteer).

Guide the Study

2. Read John 2:13-14. Discuss the importance for Jews of going to the house of God to remember the time when the Jews left Egypt (Passover).
3. Read “The Temple” on the sidebar of the Study Guide. Display a picture of the temple. Explain: *Worship in Jesus' time had become confusing (hard to understand). Jesus wanted to take this confusion out of the house of God. By showing His authority, Jesus called the people of His day and us to a new way of life.*
4. Ask: *What did Jesus find happening in the temple?* Discuss how it was wrong to sell animals for the sacrifices and make money from the Jews who traveled to Jerusalem for the feasts. Point out that the only place non-Jews (Gentiles) could worship and pray to God had been turned into a “shopping mall.” Describe what Jesus did about this.
5. State: *Religious leaders in Jesus' day let the house of God become a place that made truly worshipping God difficult for those who were not Jews.*
6. Read John 2: 15-17. Ask: *What would you have thought if you had come to the house of God and saw what Jesus did? Imagine that you were going home to tell a family member what had happened, what would you tell them?* Allow time for several to respond.
7. Ask: *“What might Jesus want to change about our worship today?”* Have the class name various things Jesus might change if He were to walk into your/their church(es) today. List responses on the board.
8. Read John 2:18-22. Ask: *What question did the Jews ask Jesus about the cleansing of the temple? Why would they ask such a question?* Point out that this was a question about His authority or right to do something. This was the proper purpose of the signs Jesus did— to show that His teachings and actions were that of One sent from God.
9. Ask: *How did Jesus answer? What did the Jews think Jesus' statement (words) meant?* Discuss the fact that the sign Jesus told them was something that would not happen right then. (The temple would be destroyed and in 3 days He would raise it up.) Jesus was speaking of His body, not the house of God where they were

standing. They would kill Him, but 3 days later He would arise. The Jews thought he meant the buildings.

10. Read John 2:23-25. Ask: *What effect did Jesus' statement have on (or how did His words make a difference to) His followers later?* Point out that His followers may not have understood all that Jesus was saying at the time, but later they remembered what He had said. Jesus' signs showed that He was who He said He was.

Encourage Application

11. Ask: *In what ways do we disobey Jesus today, in how we think and how we act?*

12. Discuss how Jesus cleaned the house of God and this was a sign from the Old Testament of His authority. Read Malachi 3:1-5. Say: *These verses tell that the Lord would suddenly come to His Temple to deal with the problems.* Read Zechariah 14:21. Point out that Zechariah had told about this day when there would no longer be any merchant in the Temple area.

13. Say: *It is strange that no one understood what was happening. The Jews expected the Messiah to give them certain signs, and one of the signs Malachi had written was that the Messiah would suddenly come to His Temple and purify the sons of Levi. Jesus had just done that, but they did not recognize Him.*

14. Close with prayer, thanking God that Jesus showed His Authority as God's Son.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Write the following on the board or poster:

Is (Y)our Church
"in the way" of God
or "on the way" to God?

♦ Sing, "The Lord is in His Holy Temple." Say: *Today's lesson teaches us about a time when Jesus showed many people that He had the authority to clean the House of God.*

Encourage Application

♦ Ask: *Agree or disagree? The people of Jesus' day thought the house of God could save them. A comfortable place of worship is nice, but only Jesus Christ can save us.*

♦ Prepare a drama using John 2:15-22. The characters are: merchants selling their goods in places around the room, Jesus, and His followers. For a drama you can use, see: "Jesus Cleans His Father's House" (<http://www.beau.org/~vickir/drama/play1.html>).

The play starts this way:

When our play begins, it is just before the Passover celebration. In Jesus' time, the Passover holiday was as important to them as the Christmas holiday is to most of us. People from all around traveled to Jerusalem so that they could celebrate Passover at the temple.

Just as we look for a perfect Christmas tree and just the right gift, they looked for a perfect Passover lamb. The lamb would be the family's Passover sacrifice to God asking that their sins would be forgiven and that He would take care of them.

Today it is 4 days before Passover and the people are bringing their lambs to the temple so that the priests can inspect them to see if they are perfect. Only perfect young lambs could be offered as Passover sacrifices. We're in the outer courts of the temple just before the people arrive to have the temple priests inspect their lambs.

♦ Use questions from "Things to Think About" in the Study Guide. Ask: *How does the resurrection of Christ give power to believers to serve God and to become witnesses for Him?*

♦ Encourage the class to consider how well they obey God. Say: *Jesus' authority as Messiah was shown as He cleaned the house of God.*

♦ Close with prayer that as we worship, we would remember that Jesus is greater than the temple. Thank God that He is always with us and pray that we would realize that He alone is the One we should worship.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 4: A Teacher Talks with Jesus

Lesson Focus

Jesus' talk with Nicodemus teaches us that real life comes from being "born from above" through belief in Jesus as God's Son.

Focal Text

John 3:1-16

Memory Verse

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son. Whoever puts his trust in God's Son will not be lost but will have life that lasts forever." (John 3:16)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Study Outline Poster for the class:

A Teacher Talks with Jesus
 John 3:1-16
 Wrong Ways to Get to God —John 3:1-2
 Jesus Shows Nicodemus the Way —John 3:3-15
 For God so Loved the World — John 3:16

- ◆ Bring at least 50 pennies for Connect #1.
- ◆ Find pictures of Nicodemus and of Moses holding a serpent for Guide #4 and #10.
- ◆ Bring a clear bottle with a half cup of bleach, a bottle with a half cup of water and blue liquid food coloring for first Supplement idea.
- ◆ Bring an electric fan for Application #14.

Connect with Life

1. Ask someone to come up to a table at the front of the room, and facing the class, stack up as many pennies as possible before the penny tower topples. Say: *These pennies are to remind us about the rules Nicodemus tried to follow to be right with God. There are too many.*
2. Write the following statements on a board: "It does not matter where you come from. What matters is where you are going."

3. Preview the study by dividing the class into 3 groups: The Narrator, Jesus and Nicodemus. Let each group read their part from the Bible verses printed on the back page of the study guide.

Guide the Study

4. Read John 3:1. Show a picture of Nicodemus. Ask the class to call out words from verse 1 that tell about him. Write these on the board (proud religious law-keeper, leader of the Jews, teacher among the Jews). Discuss other words people might use to describe Nicodemus (He was wealthy, wise, respected, interested in God, self-confident).
5. Lead the class to think about Nicodemus and the kind of religious rituals he would have observed as a Jewish leader. Invite comments. Explain the passage using information in the Study Guide and the Adult Teaching Guide. Point out that the rituals and practices Nicodemus observed were supposed to help people relate properly to God, but they were incomplete. Ask class members how rituals in the church today might also be missing something.
6. Read John 3:2. Discuss why Nicodemus came to Jesus (to talk about His mighty works—the signs that God was with Jesus). Say: *He knew what Jesus had done and learned that they proved Jesus was from God.*
7. Read John 3:3 Ask: *What did Jesus say one must do to enter the holy nation of God? Say: Jesus said it is so life-changing that it is like being born all over again. Even though Nicodemus was a religious leader, he too needed to do this.*
8. Ask class members to tell how life is different when you become a part of the holy nation of God.
9. Read John 3:4-8. Say: *Nicodemus missed Jesus' point. Explain that he thought because he was born in a Jewish family he deserved to be part of the holy nation of God. In addition, he was an important religious man and thought that he did not need any new kind of birth. Say: Nicodemus thought that he did not need to go back and start over in his relationship to God like other people who were not even trying to serve Him. But Jesus shocked him by saying that no one could enter the kingdom without an entirely new birth. Nicodemus needed this new birth.*

10. Read John 3:9-15. Show the picture of Moses holding the snake. Say: *John 3:14 can be a picture of Jesus' crucifixion on a "pole" — the cross. Jesus died on the cross in order to take away the power of death. John tells us that people must believe in the Messiah in order to be saved.*

11. Read John 3:16 together. Ask the class to suggest how the different parts of this verse can be used to lead someone to become a Christian.

12. Comment that John 3:16 is the most popular verse in the Bible. Many people say it is their favorite verse. Invite class members to quote this verse in their own language. Ask: *Why do you think John 3:16 is so well known?* Receive responses. Note that many people say this one verse tells us all we need to know about God. Ask the class to state all the truths about Jesus in this verse. List them on the board (Jesus is God's only Son, He came to earth because God loved the world, Trusting in Him gives people life that lasts forever—they will never be lost).

Encourage Application

13. Sing "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know."

14. Use a fan to move the pages of a book. Ask: *How does this show that though you cannot see the Spirit of God, you can see His actions.*

15. Ask class members to write down on a piece of paper important parts of why they became a follower of Christ. Encourage class members to focus now on how they realized they needed Jesus in their lives. Ask members if they would pray that they would be ready to share these words during the coming week with a person or people God has pointed out to them.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Place a bottle with ½ cup of Clorox Bleach on a table at the front of the class. Open a smaller bottle which contains 1 cup of water. Add 3 drops of blue food coloring to the bottle of water. Mix. Open the bottle which has the bleach. Pour the blue water into it. Put the lid back on the bottle. Watch as the color slowly changes from blue back to clear (It takes a minute). Say: *This is a picture of our lives of sin before Jesus takes the sin away. In the same way that the blue water turned clear, God no longer sees our sins because of what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross. Our lesson today teaches us that we need Jesus in order to be born from above.*

Encourage Application

◆ Review the story by showing pictures and words from "A Temple Leader Visits Jesus." See:

(<http://www.bibleforchildren.org/PDFs/english/A%20Temple%20Leader%20Visits%20Jesus%20English%20PDA.pdf>).

◆ Read and discuss "Things to Think About" from the Study Guide.

◆ Remind the class that John later tells about Nicodemus. After Jesus was crucified, Nicodemus went with Joseph of Arimathea in taking the body of Jesus down from the cross, preparing His body, and burying Him. They used the spices Nicodemus had taken with him—a mixture of myrrh and aloe that weighed about 75 pounds. Say: *This is a big change for a leader who had earlier chosen to go to see Jesus at night. It is not enough to be a secret follower of Christ. We must all stand up and be counted.*

◆ Prepare and give out book marks making a "word cloud" of John 3:16 at <http://www.wordle.net/> or http://www.abcya.com/word_clouds.htm or use the example below to make your own.



Teaching Guide

Lesson 5: The Well of Life that Lasts Forever

Lesson Focus

Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman shows that "living water" is available to all but only from Jesus.

Focal Text

John 4:4-30, 39-42

Memory Verse

"Whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty. The water that I will give him will become in him a well of life that lasts forever."

(John 4:14)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Study Outline Poster as follows:

The Well of Life That Lasts Forever

John 4:4-30, 39-42

Jesus Teaches in Samaria—John 4:4-9

The Promise of Living Water—John 4:10-18

True Worship—John 4:19-27

The Samaritans Understand Who Jesus Is —

John 4:28-30, 39-42

Connect with Life

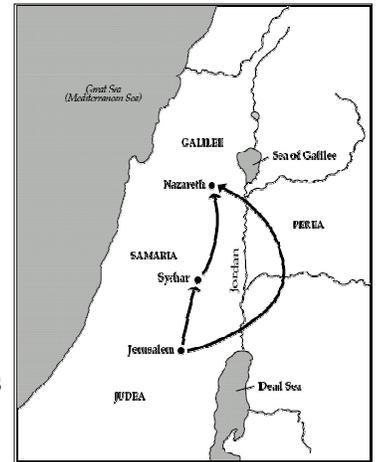
1. Write the number "3" on the board. Ask the class to name 3 ways that people try to find happiness or fulfillment (shopping, relationships, money, etc.). Explain that this lesson is about a woman who did not understand how to find true fulfillment and security until she met Jesus. Draw a picture of a glass of water on the board.

2. Sing "The Joy of the Lord is my Strength" ending with the verse which says, "He gives me living water and I thirst no more."

Guide the Study

3. Read John 4:4-6. Locate Samaria on a Bible map. Ask someone to read the article titled "Samaria" on the sidebar of the Study Guide (second page of the lesson).

4. Read John 4:7-9. Ask class members to name 3 things about this woman that would keep Jews from talking with her (First, she is a Samaritan. second, she is guilty of sex sins, and third, she is a woman). Remind the class about the way the Jews felt toward the Samaritans. Ask the class if they know what might have happened to this



woman if the proud religious law-givers had punished her. Say: *Jesus' words not only remind us that this woman had sins, but also remind us of the sins of the men of that city.*

5. Ask: *What do you think the woman was thinking when a Jewish man began speaking to her?* (You could say something like, "He is a man, I am a woman. There seems to be no reason for Him to speak to me but Jesus gets my attention by asking for a drink of water. And I had something He needs—water.") Remind the class that Jews did not share eating or drinking utensils with Samaritans. The woman cannot help but inquire of Jesus why He would ask the unthinkable. Jesus was willing to cross cultural barriers to help this woman.

6. Read John 4:10-14. Ask: *What might the woman have thought when Jesus told her He could give her something to drink? He didn't have His own bucket, and He had already asked her for a drink. So how was it possible that He would have water for her?* (Jesus answered her that she is the one who needs water and the kind He has is far better than hers.) Explain that the water Jesus has is "spiritual" water—meaning it is salvation which Jesus offers her. Ask: *Does the woman understand at first all that Jesus is saying, or does she think it is real water, the way Nicodemus thought Jesus was talking about really being born again?*

7. Read John 4:15-18. Ask: *Is the woman ready for the "better water" that Jesus offers?* (She admits she wants this water). Point out that Jesus is now ready to help this woman understand more. Jesus shows her that she has need of "water" that will cleanse her of sin. Jesus tells

her to go and get her husband, and bring him back to the well. He knows she is not married to the man she is living with. Jesus begins to show her that He knows she has a need for cleansing from sin. She does not lie but she does not tell Jesus all the truth.

8. Read John 4:19-24. Ask: *What do Jesus and the woman talk about?* (The difference between the “faith” of the Samaritans and the “faith” of the Jews.) Explain that the Samaritans believed they must worship God on Mount Gerizim, while the Jews insisted God must be worshipped in Jerusalem. Jesus tells the woman that the worship God finds acceptable is not Samaritan worship, nor the worship of the proud religious law-keepers. Men can only worship God when they do so “in spirit and in truth” (verses 23 and 24).

9. Read John 4:25-30. Ask: *What important truth did Jesus reveal to this woman?* (I am the Christ, the One talking with you.) Ask: *What do you think the followers thought when they saw Jesus talking to this Samaritan woman?*

10. Read John 4:39-42. Ask:
—*Why do you think the Samaritan woman wanted to tell everyone in her village about this Jewish man?*
—*Do you think she was afraid of what others would say if they knew she was talking to a Jew?*
—*What led the Samaritans to believe in Jesus?*

11. Discuss what the other Samaritans did about what Jesus said and what He had to offer them. Ask the class whether they would have believed because of someone else’s words or whether they would have wanted to hear Jesus’ words for themselves.

Encourage Application

12. Ask class to look at verses 9, 11, 15, 19, 29. List on the board the words the Samaritan woman used when she talked to Jesus in these verses. Ask: *What do you notice about what she called Jesus the more she talked and came to know Jesus?*

13. Ask class members to remember when they first decided to believe in Jesus. Ask: *Did you feel an excitement about sharing with others what had happened to you?* Call for volunteers to share.

14. Close with prayer that we will learn to relate to all people as Jesus did.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- ◆ Share with the class about meeting a stranger who made a difference and changed your life. The change might be something small like a time that caused you to continue to think about the conversation for a time afterward, or as big as causing you to change your thinking or behavior. Invite class members to share a time when they met a stranger who changed their lives in either a small or a big way.
- ◆ Suggest that the verses to be studied in John are about two strangers—Jesus and the Samaritan woman—and their conversation at a well.
- ◆ Use the drawings suggested on the website below to illustrate the story of the Woman at the Well. (As the verses are read, a picture is drawn illustrating the story. When completed the picture is turned upside down to reveal a picture of Jesus.) See:
http://crazytieguy.com/woman_at_the_well.htm

Encourage Application

- ◆ Read and discuss the questions from “Things to Think About” in the Study guide.
- ◆ Ask someone to sing, “Fill My Cup, Lord,” or use the words as a closing meditation:

Like the woman at the well I was seeking
For things that could not satisfy;
And then I heard my Savior speaking;
“Draw from my well that never shall run dry”.

Fill my cup Lord,
I lift it up, Lord!

Come and quench this thirsting of my soul;
Bread of heaven, Feed me till I want no more
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole!

- ◆ Give class members a piece of paper. On one side, have them list people they know who try to find fulfillment outside of God. Ask them to pray that these people will come to understand God is their only source of true, lasting fulfillment. On the second side, have them list things they themselves might be using to find fulfillment. Close with prayer for awareness of when we use anything other than God to find fulfillment.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 6: Signs-Faith or True Faith

Lesson Focus

Jesus healed the son of a man who worked for the king. This showed Jesus' power and led the man to express true faith.

Focal Text

John 4:43-54

Memory Verse

"But these are written so you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. When you put your trust in Him, you will have life that lasts forever through His name." (John 20:31)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare the Lesson Study Outline for this lesson:
- ◆ Make 2 posters. One that says, "My faith is strong

Signs-Faith or True Faith

John 4:43-54

Jesus Returns to Cana in Galilee — John 4:43-47

Jesus Heals a Royal Official's Son — John 4:48-49

The Meaning of the Sign — John 4:50-54

Meaning for Today

when I see God act," and another that says, "My faith is strong because of who God is." Place these at opposite sides of the classroom for #1 and #14.

- ◆ Obtain a map to show where Jesus had been traveling for #3.

Connect with Life

1. Ask class members to look at the 2 posters you have placed in the classroom. Ask members to think about their own faith. Say: *If you had to stand under one sign or the other which one better describes you?* Gather up the 2 posters to use again at the end of the lesson.
2. Explain that today's lesson will be about a healing and about 2 different kinds of faith. Explain that during the lesson each person can learn about the importance of the

healing and think about their own faith. Begin with prayer.

Guide the Study

3. Read John 4:43-47. Ask class to name aloud the places and events from Jesus' recent trips mentioned in these verses. Point these out on the map. Ask why the Galileans might have welcomed Jesus (see John 4:45).
4. Point out the 7 hour trip the father made to see Jesus. Say: He walked about 20 miles to see Jesus and addressed Him as "Sir." This tells us that even though the man had legal authority, he was submitting to Jesus. The man traveled this distance to ask Jesus to cure his son, who was very sick and near death.
5. Ask: *What were the different reasons or similar reasons that the Galileans and the Father had in wanting to see Jesus?*
6. Read 4:48-49. Ask: *Did Jesus seem to say "No," when the father asks Him to come?*
7. Explain that earlier, people in Jerusalem followed Jesus just to see the signs and believed in Him because of the signs they saw. Now, it seemed the Galileans were doing the same thing (4:48). State that even after Jesus told the father, "Unless you see special things and powerful works done, you will not believe," the father still asked for his son's healing (4:49).
8. Read John 4:50-54. Ask: *How easy or difficult would it be to believe the words of Jesus at a time like this?*
9. Ask: *How did Jesus say "Yes" in a way that was different from what the father had expected?* Explain that the man realized that his son got well at the exact time that Jesus said "Yes." Because of this, he and his servants believed in Jesus.
10. Ask the class to name each action the father took that showed his faith in Jesus (making the trip to see Jesus; asking Jesus to heal his son; insisting a second time that Jesus go with him to heal his son; taking Jesus at His word when he was told to leave because his son would live; asking the messenger the time of his son's healing and then sharing this story with his household).
11. Discuss the motives and actions of the Galileans and

of the father. Ask: *What is important about this story for you? What is important about this story for all Christians?*

Encourage Application

12. Point out the differences of the first miracle at a wedding (a time of joy and celebration), and the second miracle when the child was so sick (fear and worry). Note also the difference in the kinds of people for whom Jesus performs the miracle. The first is for a Jewish couple who were probably poor, (because they ran out of wine at the wedding). The second is for a man who is probably a Gentile and who is rich (he has servants). This conversation with the father is the third conversation recorded between these two miracles—first with a male Jewish religious leader (Nicodemus), next with a female half-Jewish prostitute (the woman at the well), and now with a fully Gentile administrator. In each case, Jesus presents Himself as their Savior.

13. Explain that this healing is the end of this part of John. It began with the wedding in Cana. Both the wedding miracle and healing were on “the third day.” In both, Jesus says “no,” at the beginning and in both, servants are among the few who were able to see what Jesus has done.

14. Hold up the posters (from step 1), and ask class members to remember which sign they felt closer to at the beginning of the lesson. Ask them to consider whether their faith is now closer to “Signs-Faith” or “True Faith.”

15. Ask class to prayerfully consider at least 3 actions they are willing to take that will move them closer to true faith. After giving the class time to think of some answers, ask them to write these actions down.

16. Say: *This is an important lesson about who Jesus is. Jesus is the Savior of all people in all of life’s situations. No matter who you are or what your situation is, Jesus cares about you and can help you.*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- ◆ Ask members to give their definitions of what true faith means to them. Write these on the marker board.
- ◆ Open with a time of prayer, asking God to reveal to each person whether they have “signs-faith” or “true faith.”
- ◆ Ask someone to read aloud the first 3 paragraphs in the Study Guide.
- ◆ List some typical childhood illnesses on the board.

Examples include ear infection, sore tonsils, flu, measles, chicken pox, cuts, broken leg or arm, etc. Ask any father present to share what they would do for their sick child.

Encourage Application

◆ Compare “Signs-Faith” with “True Faith,” and tell why Jesus healing the official’s son was important.

◆ Read and consider “Things to Think About” in the study guide. Read the short article “Belief” below the 6 questions.

◆ Ask the following questions:

—*How did Jesus prove he was the Son of God?* (By performing miracles.)

—*Did Jesus always heal people the same way?* (No)

—*Did Jesus have to touch a person to heal him?* (No)

—*Can Jesus heal anything?* (Yes)

◆ Say: *Signs-faith can lead to true faith, but it does not always do so. This means that if your faith began because of some miraculous sign, you should seek to deepen your faith by studying the word of God to find out more about who God is. That will also tell you who Jesus is. There is nothing that can take the place of having a relationship based on the true word of God. Just as the father and all in his house ended up having true faith in Jesus, faith that begins with a sign can grow to a strong true faith.*

◆ Sing a song of faith or healing such as “The Great Physician.”

◆ Close with a time of prayer, asking God to reveal to each person whether they have “signs-faith” or “true faith.”

Teaching Guide

Lesson 7: Who's in Charge Here?

Lesson Focus

Jesus' healing the man on the Day of Rest showed His authority based on His unique relationship with the Father as God's Son.

Focal Text

John 5:1-24, 31-40

Memory Verse

“For sure, I tell you, anyone who hears My Word and puts his trust in Him Who sent Me has life that lasts forever. He will not be guilty. He has already passed from death into life.”

(John 5:24)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Study Outline Poster:

Who's in Charge Here?

John 5:1-24, 31-40

Jesus at the Pool Called Bethesda — John 5:1-8

A Problem with the Healing — John 5:9-15

The Jews Make It Very Hard for Jesus —
John 5:16-24

Witnesses for Jesus — John 5:31-40

- ◆ Find a children's connect the dots picture to show the class for first Supplement idea.
- ◆ Make and display a poster with the 7 signs listed in Step 2. Find or draw pictures to illustrate each one.

Connect with Life

1. Review the lessons covered thus far by explaining that this study of the Gospel of John divides the material into the Book of Signs (John 1—12) and the Book of Glory (John 13—20) with chapter 21 as the conclusion.
2. Explain that this lesson is the third of 7 signs or miracles found in the part of John known as the “Book of Signs”. These signs teach that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. These signs include the following:

(1) turning water into wine (2:1-11); (2) healing the son of a royal official (4:46-54); (3) healing a paraplegic (5:1-18); (4) feeding the multitude (6:1-14); (5) walking on water (6:16-21); (6) restoring the sight of a blind man (9:1-41); and (7) raising Lazarus back to life (11:1-44). Say: *Beginning with this lesson Jesus shows Who He is during celebrations of important feasts in Jewish life.*

Guide the Study

3. Read John 5:1–9. List on the marker board words that describe the scene. Ask class to use the 5 senses: sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch. Use the following to explain the place where the pool called Bethesda was:

“The pool was surrounded by 5 covered walkways.

This was an area in which the sick came day after day.

It was a scene of beauty along with great suffering and hopelessness.”

4. Ask: *Can you imagine what life was like day after day near the sheep gate, how it felt to meet Jesus, and how it felt to walk for the first time in 38 years?*

5. Point out that Jesus asked the man who could not walk, “Do you want to get well?” Ask: *What did the man tell Jesus?* (He had no one to help him into the pool.)

6. List on the marker board the 3 things Jesus told the man to do: 1. Get up, 2. Pick up your bed, and 3. Walk. Point out that when the man was healed, he did not know who Jesus was. Say: *The Lord's work was not dependent on the man's faith and/or knowledge.*

7. Call attention to the following:

—Jesus' healing happened at once.

—It was complete. The man stood and walked although he had not walked in 38 years.

—Jesus' miracles were undeniable.

8. Read John 5:10-13. Ask the class to listen for the disagreement that happened after the man's healing (carrying the mat on the Day of Rest). Discuss why this was such a problem. Remind the class that making rules more important than people is a form of legalism. Say: *We can still find legalism in many of our churches today.* Ask: *Why is it that so many people's faith consists of outward, external rules instead of an inner change?*

9. Read John 5:14-15. Say: *Jesus is more interested in the man's spiritual condition than the physical. We all suffer from a spiritual sickness. That sickness is called sin.*

10. Read John 5:16-24. Say: *In verse 17 Jesus made 3 claims.* List these on the board: God is always at His work (implying that even God works on the Sabbath); the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is Jesus' Father; and because Jesus' Father was at work, Jesus must be at work also.

11. Call attention to verses 19-20. Explain how far the Jewish people went to honor the Day of Rest. Point out that Jesus had the authority to do these things on the Day of Rest since He was the Son of God and was sent to do God's work. Emphasize that Jesus was not trying to put Himself above God. Discuss some of the ways Jesus showed His dependence on the Father (for example prayer and yielding His own will to the Father's will).

12. Ask the class to underline verse 24 and compare it with John 3:16 in Lesson 4.

13. Read John 5:31-40. List on the board the witnesses to Jesus (John the Baptist, Jesus' miracles, God, Scripture). Write these verses on the board and have class match the verse to the witness: (5:33-35; 5:36, 5:37; 5:39). Ask: *If you had been present, which of these 4 witnesses would have probably been most convincing to you? Why?*

Encourage Application

14. A careful reading of the dialogue between Jesus and the religious leaders of the day will help us understand why they rejected Jesus as the promised Savior. Jesus did not do what they thought He should do. He did not meet their expectations. Present-day believers can learn much from these events as we seek to live out our faith in everyday life.

15. Ask the class to list on the board as many symptoms of sin as you can (separation from God, broken relationships, hate, etc.). Read Romans 6:23. Remind the class that when we accept Christ's authority in our lives we are delivered from the disease of sin.

16. Sing "Trust and Obey."

17. End the class with prayer, acknowledging Christ's authority over all things.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

◆ Bring a dot to dot picture to show the class. Show how you follow the numbers, connect the dots, and then you can see the picture. Say: *These pictures do not look like anything until we "connect the dots." The lesson today tells of a time when Jesus healed a man but the religious leaders could not connect the dots to see that Jesus was God's Son.*

◆ Read the first paragraph in the Study Guide. Point out that many of the rules the Jews followed were not in the Bible, but had been added to it over the years.

Encourage Application

◆ Say: *Try to identify some religious rules that are taken too far so that they become legalistic. Pray for God to reveal those areas in your life that you have not given to him. Reflect on those time when you were sure of the leadership of Christ in your heart.*

◆ Read and discuss "Things to Think About" in the Study Guide.

◆ Ask class to look at the Memory Verse for this lesson. Write the verse on the board, read it, and then erase a few words each time it is read, until all the words are erased and the verse is memorized.

◆ Ask: *How does our church welcome those who are like this man who could not walk? If time permits take a tour of your church, starting in the parking lot and walking through the worship center and to your classroom. Ask, *Would it be hard for a person who could not walk to come to our class or worship service?**

◆ Close with prayer that we would recognize the authority of Jesus as the Son of God.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 8: Hungry for...?

Lesson Focus

Jesus' feeding of the 5,000 and His walking on water show He truly is the "living bread" who uniquely and supremely has the words of eternal life.

Focal Text

John 6:1-20, 25-35, 48-51, 66-69

Memory Verse

"We believe and know You are the Christ. You are the Son of the Living God."
(John 6:69)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Study Outline Poster for this lesson:

Hungry for...?

John 6:1-20, 25-35, 48-51, 66-69
Serving the Bread, Walking on the Water —
John 6:1-20
Jesus Is the Bread of Life—John 6:25-35, 48-51
Who Else Can We Go To? —John 6:66-69

- ◆ Locate pictures of Jesus feeding the 5,000 and walking on water.
- ◆ Purchase a can of whole sardines and dinner rolls and put the can and rolls on a plate to display for #6.
- ◆ Use a wall map to discover where Jesus performed these miracles.

Connect with Life

1. Tell the class to imagine they are going on a picnic on a beautiful day and they can bring any food they want. Each person takes turns naming a picnic food or beverage. One rule is that no item can be repeated. Continue until no one can think of anything that has not already been named.
2. Ask: *If we brought everything we named, would it be enough to feed us all?* Say: *We will learn in this lesson*

about a time when it seemed there would not be enough food to feed everyone.

3. Say: *Let's read what Jesus did.* Point out that this is the one miracle, besides the resurrection, which appears in all 4 gospels (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17).

Guide the Study

4. Read John 4:1-14. Locate the Sea of Galilee on a map. Point out the importance of the Passover, the special meal the Jews ate to remember when they were freed from slavery in Egypt.
5. Explain that every time Jesus healed someone who was sick, the people were amazed. They wanted to see more miracles and signs, so they would follow Jesus wherever He would go. Sometimes, hundreds, even thousands of people were following Him. Say: *Imagine that you were alive during this time, and that you were one of those following Jesus. After trying to keep up with the rest of the followers for a few hours, you might get hungry. But there were no fast food restaurants back then.*
6. Display the plate with the can of sardines and dinner rolls.
7. As the verses are read, write the following on the board:
 - Jesus knew the needs of His followers. John 6:5.
 - Jesus showed compassion for His followers when He took care of their needs. John 6:5-6.
 - The boy gave his lunch to Jesus and Jesus used it to feed 5,000 men. John 6:9.
 - Jesus showed His authority as God by feeding 5,000 men with 5 barley loaves and 2 fish. John 6:9-11.
 - Jesus gave thanks before He ate. John 6:11.
 - Jesus showed His generosity by giving more food than the people needed. John 6:11-13.
 - Jesus told His followers not to waste food. John 6:12.
8. Say: *A good way to remember the number of fish and the number of pieces of bread which were in the boy's lunch is to hold up one hand with 5 fingers spread apart and say "5 loaves;" then hold out two hands, palms*

down, parallel to the floor with the thumbs moving back and forth as if they were swimming and say “2 fish.”

9. Read John 6:15-20. Ask: *Why did Jesus feel that he needed to leave the crowds of people? Which seems like the bigger miracle, that Jesus could feed over 5,000 with 1 lunch or that He could walk on water?*

10. Highlight the point that Jesus walking on the water is another sign or miracle that shows He is the One who has been sent by God.

11. Write “Followers” on one side of the board and “Jesus” on the other. Ask the class to list words which show how the followers felt when they were in the boat and words which Jesus used as He spoke to them.

FOLLOWERS	JESUS
fear	peace

12. Erase the followers’ side, circle the words of Jesus and Say: *Jesus wants to replace the old with the new.*

13. Read John 6:25-35. Write “I am the Bread of Life” on the board. Ask the following:

—*Can you explain what Jesus meant in John 6:29?*
 —*Why do you think the people wanted to see another sign from Jesus in verse 30?*
 —*From verse 33, how does Jesus, the bread of heaven, give life to the world?*

14. Compare what Jesus meant in verse 35, “I am the Bread of Life,” after He fed the 5,000 and what He meant when He said, “Whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty. The water that I will give him will become in him a well of life that lasts forever.” (John 4:14)

15. Share with the class the “I am” sayings of Jesus.

Point out that the one in this lesson is the first of 7:
 —“I am the Bread of Life.” (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51)
 —“I am the Light of the world.” (8:12; see 9:5)
 —“I am the Door of the sheep.” (10:7, 9)
 —“I am the Good Shepherd.” (10:11, 14)
 —“I am the One who raises the dead and gives them life.” (11:25)
 —“I am the Way and the Truth and the Life.” (14:6)
 —“I am the true Vine.” (15:1, 5)

16. Read John 6:48-51. Write the word, “Manna,” on one side of the board and the words, “Bread of Life,” on the

other side. Ask: *What is different about each kind of bread?* Try to do this with one-word answers. Point out that the Bread of Life is once and for all. Remind the class that Jesus is the true source of life and spiritual food.

17. Say: *The people following Jesus did not understand that the Bread was a person, Jesus himself.*

18. Read John 6:66-69. Ask class members to call out important words or phrases from these verses.

Encourage Application

19. Ask members to underline verse 69 and then look at the Memory Verse in the Study Guide. Ask: *What other verses in the passage we studied today would be good to memorize.* Allow time for responses.

20. Answer the questions in the “Things to Think About” in the Study Guide.

21. Ask members to think about areas in their life where they are settling for earthly bread rather than the true Bread of Life and to commit themselves to the true Bread of Life. Close with prayer.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Ask the class to imagine that they have a packed lunch for school or work, as normal. Say: *You come in one day and you're the only person with a lunch. What thoughts would go through your mind? What would you do? Our lesson today tells about such a time.*

Encourage Application

◆ Discuss how Jesus showed both loving-care and His authority as God when He fed 5000 men.

◆ Read Peter’s question in verse 68 once again. Say: *Jesus Christ is the only person in history who sacrificed Himself for humanity. The Bible tells us He was the only person worthy to do so because He was sent from heaven by God the Father.*

◆ Sing “Break Thou the Bread of Life.”

◆ Close with a prayer of commitment to Jesus as Lord. Before praying, invite people who feel they need to commit themselves to Jesus as Lord to talk with you or other members of the class.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 9: Conflict over Jesus

Lesson Focus

The people Jesus met at the Supper of the Tents (Feast of Booths) show that His claim to be from God forces a decision as to whether people will accept Him and His offer of genuine life.

Focal Text

John 7:1-31, 37-43

Memory Verse

“The Holy Writings say that rivers of living water will flow from the heart of the one who puts his trust in Me.” (John 7:38)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Study Outline Poster for this lesson:

Conflict Over Jesus

John 7:1-31, 37-43

Brotherly Advice—John 7:1-10

Conflict over Jesus Grows—John 7:11-31

Decision Time—John 7:37-43

Connect with Life

1. Begin by asking: *Can you think of some decisions we may choose to make that demand a life-changing commitment?* List these on the board. (Prompt, if needed, by suggesting marriage, joining the military or signing a mortgage for a home.)
2. Note that John chapters 7—8 tell of a time of growing ill feelings toward Jesus. Explain that this time of difficulty came between the fifth sign when Jesus walked on water (John 6:16-21) and the sixth sign when Jesus restored the sight of a blind man (9:1-41).
3. State that it was six months after the celebration of Passover, and the Jews celebrated the Supper of the Tents (Feast of Booths or Tabernacles). This feast was about 2 blessings: (1) the end of the harvest season; and

(2) God’s goodness to the people during the wilderness wanderings. Leviticus 23 tells about the feast. The week-long celebration included the building of tents or booths. The people lived in these tents during the feast as a reminder of the movable tents their ancestors used during the wilderness wanderings.

Guide the Study

4. Read John 7:1-10. Divide the class into 3 groups. Ask one group to read aloud the quoted words of Jesus’ brothers (verses 3-4), and another the quoted words of Jesus (verses 6-8). The third group will read the narration, stopping for the quotations.
5. Ask these questions about Jesus’ brothers:
 - Why do you think Jesus’ half brother would not believe?*
 - Were they really worried about Him? What was their true goal? (“For not even His brothers were believing in Him,” John 7:5).*
 - In what ways might Jesus’ life and teachings have embarrassed His family?*
 - In what ways would their lives change if Jesus were to prove Himself to be Israel’s true Messiah? (These brothers did later become believers and were influential in the early church – Acts 1:14.)*
 - Why did Jesus say, “My time is not yet here”?*
 - Why did it seem like good advice for Jesus to avoid Jerusalem at this time? (See John 5:16; 6:60-66; 7:1.)*
 - Why do you think Jesus waited for a time but then went to the feast?*
6. Begin a chart to list all the people who questioned Jesus:

Those Who Questioned	Their Response to Jesus
Jesus’ Brothers	
Jewish Leaders	

7. Add more names to the chart as other verses in the study are read. For example: The crowd of pilgrims to the feast (7:12-13); Jerusalem residents (7:25-27); the temple police (7:32). Guide the group to identify the responses from each for the right column.

8. Read John 7:12-31. Discuss Jesus' defense of His teachings (7:16-19) and His actions (7:21-24).

9. Read John 7:37-39. Ask: *Who did people think Jesus was?* (a prophet, the Christ/Messiah, and not born in Bethlehem). Return to the right column of the comparison chart in step 6. Write these 3 opinions opposite "the crowds."

10. Review John 6:37-39. Say: *Jesus had told the Jews that He was the Bread of Life and could give them eternal life if they would come to Him. However, He also said they could drink of Him* (see also 4:10).

11. Say: *Jesus gives us what we need spiritually so we may receive eternal life, just like physical food and drink provide what we need for physical life. Coming to Jesus means to learn of Him, believe on Him, and serve Him.*

12. Add that not only did Jesus say people could drink of Him, He also said that believers would have rivers of living water flowing from within them (from their hearts).

13. Read John 7:40-44. Ask:
—*Who did some people think Jesus was?*
—*Why did some people reject Jesus as Christ, and what facts were they missing?*
—*What happened to the crowd because of Jesus and what lessons can we learn?*
—*What did some want to do to Him, and what was the result?* (Division and questions emerged within the crowd).

14. If time permits, read further from John 7:45-46. Complete the chart by finding the response of the temple guards.

Encourage Application

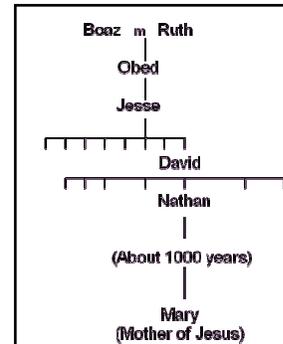
15. To the chart in Step 6, add 2 more to the list of Jesus' questioners in the left column: Our World, and Ourselves. Ask: *What are some objections people raise today about Jesus being the Christ?* Write ideas in the right column opposite "Our World." (Ideas: one of many prophets; did not exist; many ways to God; He's not for me; I don't believe the Bible, etc.).

16. Close with prayer that we would always respond to Jesus in the right way.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Prepare a Family Tree for Jesus on the board. Include His brothers:



◆ Share that Jesus' half-brothers (sons of Joseph and Mary) wanted Him to travel to Jerusalem and make an appearance at a special feast. Say: *This lesson will tell us what Jesus did and said at this feast and how people responded to Him.*

Encourage Application

◆ Discuss how, in John 7, Jesus made certain claims and then asked those who listened to make a commitment. As followers today, we too hear the claims of Jesus and are asked to make significant, life-changing commitments. Throughout this chapter, people tried to find things wrong with Jesus, argued among themselves, and refused to commit their lives to Him. Ask: *How do we do the same things?*

◆ Read and discuss "Things to Think About" from the Study Guide.

◆ Say: *We also must decide who we believe Jesus is, and make a decision that will forever change our lives.* Give each person a small piece of paper and ask each to consider these questions:

- What have you decided about Jesus?*
- When did you come to this decision?*
- Was it a hard decision for you?*
- Have you had doubts since?*
- If you are a believer, do you have any spiritual problems to bring to God today?*

◆ Sing "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus."

Teaching Guide

Lesson 10: Seeing and Believing

Lesson Focus

Jesus' healing of the blind man shows that Jesus gives a rich and full life to all who will let Him open their eyes.

Focal Text

John 9:1-22, 24-41

Memory Verse

“Jesus spoke to all the people, saying, ‘I am the Light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will not walk in darkness. He will have the Light of Life.’” (John 8:12)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Lesson Study Outline for this lesson:

Seeing and Believing

John 9:1-22, 24-41

The Power of the Light — John 9:1-7

Responses to the Light — John 9:8-12

Law and Order — John 9:13-34

Eyes Wide Open, Eyes Held Shut—John 9:35-41

- ◆ Prepare 4 posters with one of the following on each:
 - Feel bad and avoid eye contact
 - Pity the person and wonder what caused it
 - Smile and reach out to help
 - Look for a way to share Jesus' love

Connect with Life

1. Ask: *When you see a person who has a handicap, how do you feel?* Direct members to look at each of the posters and decide which one is most like how they feel. State that this lesson is about a time when Jesus saw a blind man, what He did, and how His help was received by the man, his family, and the religious leaders of the day.

Guide the Study

2. Present the verses as a “drama” or as a reading, dividing up the verses according to the following: Group

#1—Blind Man, His Parents, His Neighbors, Proud Religious Law-keepers, Group #2—Proud Religious Law keepers, and Narrator.

3. Read John 9:1-7. For the drama, allow the “actors” to mime the verses as they are read.

4. Following the reading, discuss the following:

—*What did the followers' question show about their view of suffering?*

—*How do you respond to what Jesus said about the reason for the man's sin? (9:3)*

5. Allow the “actors” to return to their places. Point out that a belief of that time was that troubles or illnesses came because of sin. Jesus said that the man's blindness was not caused by the sins of the man or his parents but the man was blind to show the work of God (John 9:3). Jesus turned the man's problems to God's purposes. The man would see Who Jesus was because of this miracle.

6. Continue an explanation of these verses using the following:

—By bringing light to the man, Jesus showed the meaning of “I am the light of the world,” (John 8:12 and 9:5).

—The lights from the Supper of Tents and House of God had probably just been put out, making Jesus' statement even more noticeable.

—Jesus did not blame the man for His blindness but rather sought to find a way to glorify God through it.

—Healing the blind was thought by the Jews to be a sign of the Messiah.

7. Read the small article “Do We Get What We Deserve?” in the Study Guide.

8. Read John 9:8-16. Continue as drama or as reading, adding additional people in the story.

9. Use the following for discussion:

—*How did the blind man's response make healing possible? (9:7)*

—*Why do you think his neighbors had doubt?*

—*Why do you think the Proud Religious Law-keepers cared more about the law than the fact that the man was now able to see for the first time?*

10. Read John 9: 17-22, 24-27. Ask the following questions:

—*What did the blind man's parents fear from the Jews?* (Being put out of the Jewish place of worship—John 9:22). Point out that the place of worship was the center of religious, economic and social activity. There was only one in each town, so being "put out" meant the end of one's religious, social and economic life in that town.
—*When the religious leaders asked the man's parents their questions, what did the parents say* (9:20-22)?
—*When the religious leaders questioned the man about his healer, what did he say* (9:25-27)?

11. Read John 9:28–34. Ask:

—*How was the healed man treated for standing up for Jesus* (9:28-34)?
—*What does the blind man tell the Proud Religious Law-keepers?* (He doesn't give a long, difficult answer. He just tells them what he knows happened to him.)

12. Read John 9:35-41. Ask: *When Jesus heard about what happened to the once-blind man and went to help, why did He refer to himself as "the Son of Man"?*

13. Discuss what the Proud Religious Law-keepers said in verses 39-41.

14. Ask: *Why did Jesus want the man to understand who He was and why He had healed him?* Discuss the importance of the man's words, in verses 25 and 38.

Encourage Application

15. Discuss how all of us need to go to Jesus so we can "see" or "see better."

16. Ask: *What were the steps in what the blind man called Jesus?* ("A Man" - John 9:11, "The One who speaks for God" (a prophet) - John 9:17, "Lord" - John 9:38)

17. Discuss how each of the following can keep people in our world from believing that Jesus can give healing and salvation:

—Skepticism (fear of being duped)
—Demand for scientific proof
—Fear of persecution
—Public (or media) opinion

18. Ask: *What did the man Jesus healed gain by letting Jesus bring him light and life? What did the Pharisees lose by refusing to believe?*

19. Say: *"There are none so blind as those who will not see."* As a closing prayer, sing together stanza 1 of the hymn, "Open My Eyes, That I May See."

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Name people who need good light to do their work (doctors, dentists, writers, and artists). Ask: *Can you name any people who prefer to do their work in the dark* (thieves, etc.)? Ask someone to read the first verse with the room darkened. Note that in today's study Jesus offered light to a man with physical blindness. He also offered to heal those who were spiritually blind.

Encourage Application

◆ Ask the following questions:

—*Who does Jesus say He is?* (Jesus says He is the light of the world)

—*On which day did Jesus heal the blind man?* (Jesus healed the blind man on the Sabbath.)

—*How did the blind man know that Jesus came from God?* (The blind man said, "If this Man were not from God, he would not be able to do anything like this." John 9:33)

—*Who did Jesus say had sight but could not see?* (Jesus said the Proud Religious Law-keepers had sight, but could not see.)

◆ Discuss why the blind man did not bow down before Jesus when he first saw Him. (He didn't recognize Jesus because he hadn't yet seen Him. Jesus put clay on the man's eyes and was gone by the time he returned after washing in the pool.)

◆ Ask: *Do you know people today who are put out of their community like the blind man because they turn to Christ?*

◆ Show flashcards to review this story. See: <http://www.calvarywilliamsport.com/blind-man.html>

◆ Ask the group to explain the responses of each of these people to Jesus' compassionate actions toward the man:

—The man's neighbors (9:8-12)

—The Pharisees (9:16)

—The man who was healed (9:17)

—The man's parents (9:20-22)

◆ Read "Things to Think About" in the Study Guide and close with prayer thanking God that Jesus can heal spiritual blindness and give light and life.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 11: Decision Time

Lesson Focus

Jesus said He was God's Son. This should challenge us to decide to believe in and follow Him the way sheep follow their shepherd.

Focal Text

John 10:22-42

Memory Verse

"My sheep hear My voice and I know them. They follow Me." (John 10:27)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Study Outline Poster for the lesson:

Decision Time

John 10:22-42

A Celebration of Dedication —John 10:22

A Big Question, A Bigger Answer—John 10:23-30

Reasons to Believe—John 10:31-39

Moving Away to the Desert—John 10:40-42

- ◆ Prepare copies of the "I am" fill-in page:

I AM

I belong to _____.

I have achieved _____.

You can trust me because I am _____.

Connect with Life

1. Pass out the "I Am" fill-in page, or read aloud and ask: *How important is your identity (who you really are) to you? Complete each sentence as you wish to be known.*

2. State that in this lesson, religious leaders were denying who Jesus said He was. We think it is important for others to know us. It was important to Jesus that people understood who He truly was.

Guide the Study

3. Read John 10:22. Ask: *What do you know about Hanukkah?* Read the paragraphs from the Study Guide which tell about the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah). Use the following to explain more:

Hanukkah

The feast began in the second century B.C. The Syrian ruler, Antiochus Epiphanes, and his forces controlled Jerusalem and Israel. Israel had some religious freedom. But Antiochus started to demand that Israel worship Greek gods. The Jews refused. In 167 B. C. Antiochus took Jerusalem, entered the temple and took the treasures, set up an altar, and offered a sacrifice to a Greek god. This was such a terrible event that it became known as the abomination of desolation or "desolating sacrilege" when the house of the Lord was made unclean (see Mark 13:14).

In 164 B. C., the priests and the people rededicated the temple and especially the altar of sacrifice. The eternal light in the temple, lighted as part of the dedication, had only enough oil for one day, but miraculously burned for 8 days. The Feast of the Dedication is a joyous celebration involving lights and remembrances of deliverance.

4. Read John 10:23-30. Ask the class to listen for what those who opposed Jesus were saying. To review, enlist one person to read the words of Jesus, and a second person to read the words of the Jewish leaders.

5. Ask: *Why do you think the Jewish leaders kept asking Jesus for more answers about who He was?* Refer to information in the Study Guide section, "A Big Question, A Bigger Answer." Continue with these questions:

—*What reason did Jesus give for their not understanding His identity (John 10:26)?*

—*What proof did Jesus offer the leaders that He is the Christ (10:25)?*

—*Why were the Jewish leaders unable to accept and understand what Jesus was saying (10:26)?*

—*What did Jesus tell the Jewish leaders about that those who believe in Him (10:28-29)?*

—*How did Jesus claim even greater power (10:30)?*

6. State that in the verses before this lesson, we find the benefits of belonging to Jesus' flock in John 10:1-18.

List these on the board:

Benefits of Belonging to Jesus — John 10:1-18

- A close relationship or belonging (10:3)
- Leadership for our daily lives (10:4)
- Safe from the punishment of sin (10:7, 9)
- A great full life (10:10)
- Care and protection (10:11-13)
- Goodness and knowledge (10:11-14)

7. Ask the class to look again at John 10:27-30. Direct them to find 2 more benefits to add to the list started in Step 6:

- Life that lasts forever, through Christ (10:28)
- Security in the hand of Jesus and the Father (10:28-29)

8. Read John 10:30-38. Ask the class to find 3 facts about Jesus' relationship with the Father: They are One (10:30); Jesus is His Son (10:36); the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father (10:38). Follow with these questions:

- Why did Jesus' claims lead the Jewish leaders to pick "up stones to throw against Him" (10:31)?*
- What proof did Jesus give them to prove He is God (10:31, 38)?*
- How do Jesus' words in verse 38 show His concern for the Jewish leaders?*

9. Ask:

- Which of the things that Jesus said made the Jewish leaders the angriest (10:30, 33, 36)?*
- Would it have been possible for the Jewish leaders to have an open mind and consider whether Jesus is who He claims to be?*

10. Read John 10:40-42. Ask: *Were the Jewish leaders able to turn His followers against Him?*

Encourage Application

11. Read Psalm 23 and ask the class to compare that to John 10:26-30.

12. Read aloud the following and ask the class to meditate on the words (or write it on a half sheet of paper and prepare it as a hand out):

- ___ I have accepted Jesus and belong to His flock.
- ___ I try to listen to His voice and follow Him each day.
- ___ My life and works show my faith.
- ___ My goal is to reflect (become like) Jesus so others see Him in my life.

___ I am able to reach out to those who come against me.

___ I trust that God has saved me and I know He has a strong hold on me.

13. Note the 2 important truths from John 10 which are very important to believers. The first is that Jesus is God. Read again John 10:30, 36, and 38, all of which state that Jesus is the Son of God and one with the Father. Ask: *Why is this truth so important to our faith as Christians?*

14. Note the second important truth in John 10:27-29. Point out that we sometimes call this truth the "Security of the Believer." Discuss the safety we can feel knowing that nothing can take us out of the hand of Christ.

15. Close with prayer, thanking God for providing the Shepherd to lead us.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Ask: *Do you know anyone whose identity has been stolen when someone took their name and information and used their credit cards? State that in this study Jesus was trying to say publicly Who He was and the Jewish Leaders were trying to deny Him and charge Him with law breaking.*

Encourage Application

◆ Discuss the difference between the world's kind of power which is a *power over* and what Jesus teaches about serving and using *power given*. Discuss why some wanted Jesus to declare that He was the Christ, but what they wanted was a political ruler.

◆ Read "Things to Think About" and "Practice What You Preach" from the Study Guide.

◆ Ask members to discuss how important it is to them to be able to say, "I am a follower of Christ."

◆ Sing "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Me."

◆ Close with prayer that many more people will put their trust in Jesus.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 12: Jesus Raises the Dead

Lesson Focus

Jesus' making Lazarus live again causes us to respond to Jesus as the One Who is the resurrection and the life.

Focal Text

John 11:14-53

Memory Verse

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the One Who raises the dead and gives them life. Anyone who puts his trust in Me will live again, even if he dies.’”

(John 11:25)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Study Outline Poster for the lesson:

Jesus Raises the Dead and Gives Them Life

John 11:14-53

Call Jesus When You Need Him — John 11:14-16

It Is Never Too Late for Hope — John 11:17-32

It's Okay to Be Sad — John 11:33-44

Why Not Believe? — John 11:45-53

Connect with Life

1. Begin by telling these examples:
 - One person prays for healing, and his prayer is answered; but another prays for healing and his disease is not cured.
 - A husband dies and the wife shows hope and faith through her tears; but another husband dies and that wife becomes bitter towards God, and leaves the church.
 - One scientist refuses to believe there is a God because he says you cannot prove there is God; another scientist finds proof of God in the natural world and writes a book about his faith.
2. State that in this lesson, Jesus performed a great miracle in raising Lazarus back to life. Some believed, but others refused and turned away. Say: *In this study we will search for reasons to believe in Jesus, even though we do not have easy answers to life's problems.*

Guide the Study

3. Share the following background material for this study. Emphasize the following points:
 - Jesus' life was in danger because the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem had decided to arrest and kill Him.
 - At first Jesus seemed to say God would handle the situation without Him going there.
 - After a delay, Jesus said He would come to Bethany.
 - Jesus' followers did not understand all that He was doing, but they agreed to walk into the danger with Him.

4. Say: *Often, when God delays in answering our prayers, it is because God has a plan we cannot know or understand but must accept it by faith.*

5. Read John 11:1-16. Ask:

—*Why would Jesus not respond to the request of dear friends like Mary and Martha?*

—*Knowing that the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem wanted to arrest and kill Jesus, how do you think his followers felt when He decided to go back to Judea to help his friends?*

6. Read John 11:17-31. Discuss these questions:

—*What gave Martha hope for her brother, even though he had died and been buried?*

—*How does the presence of Jesus in your life change the way you are able to deal with problems that come to you?*

7. Explain that Martha's words in John 11:27 can be an example to us. Point out that before Jesus called for Lazarus to come out of the grave, Martha spoke of her belief in Jesus. She said, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God. You are the One Who was to come into the world.” She had no answers, but she believed in Jesus anyway. Often people come to a place where they are so filled with grief, or hard things that happen to them, or have questions that cause them to doubt and have no answers. Belief in Jesus, the One Who gives life, is all that is needed. The life Jesus gives always lives and always overcomes, because Jesus is the resurrection and the life.

8. Read John 11:32-44. Ask and discuss these questions:

- How did Mary act towards Jesus when He had not come in time to heal her brother?*

—When Jesus saw Mary’s tears and began to weep, do you think that made Mary feel comforted or did it make her grief feel worse? Why?

—How was it possible for Mary to worship even as she cried?

—Why do you think Jesus also cried?

—Was the raising of Lazarus a resurrection from dead or did he just get better from his illness? Explain that 4 days in the tomb was proof for the Jews that Lazarus was dead. The Jewish teachers believed a person was beyond reviving after 3 days.

9. Read John 11:45-57. Explain that when Caiphas learned that Jesus had brought a dead man back to life, he called a meeting of the Jewish Council to determine a plan of action.

10. Discuss these questions:

—What do you think was Caiphas’s biggest fear, when Jesus did this great miracle?

—What did he decide to do?

—How did he try to do this?

11. Read the article called, “Life and Death” under “Things to Think About” in the Study Guide.

Encourage Application

12. Suggest helpful truths from this lesson that we can use to comfort our friends in times of grief and tragedy. Discuss how words might not be necessary at times. There are times when the person who is grieving needs someone to be with them and let them talk and cry with them.

13. Ask:

—How do the words of Martha and Mary show that we often try to tell God how to run our world?

—Why is Martha’s answer (11:23-24) a common way to respond when there is a death of a loved one?

—How does Jesus’ present-tense reply (11:25-26) bring greater hope to us in times of death?

—What part does faith play when we have hard times that we do not understand?

14. Read again the response of the Jewish leaders to this miracle in John 11:45-53. Summarize with these statements:

—Believing in Jesus is a choice, and while some saw the miracle and believed, others saw and rejected.

—If we are to experience Jesus as “the resurrection and the life,” we must choose to believe, even when we do not fully understand.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

◆ Present one of the videos from You Tube about Jesus and Lazarus:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XorDrRV9pl4>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYLavk3qorg>

◆ Ask: *What would you do if someone told you that a person you loved had died? Say: Of course, you would be very sad. This happened to Jesus—someone He was friends with was sick and died.* State that this lesson tells what Jesus did when He heard the news of his friend’s death.

Encourage Application

◆ Discuss how Jesus knew that Lazarus’ sickness and death was part of God’s plan for the future. Ask class members to think about God’s plan for them.

◆ On the board make a chart of things you already know about God’s plan (for example, the fact that you are here is part of His plan). Then, explain that even though you don’t know what will happen tomorrow (or in the future), God does. Make a column on the chart for “Tomorrow”. Suggest that at the end of tomorrow, you can complete the chart by filling in another piece of God’s plan. Say: *It is all right not to know the future because God knows it.*

◆ Use “Things to Think About” for discussion.

◆ Sing “Because He Lives.”

◆ Say: *Jesus wanted the people to know that God is powerful and He can do anything.* Remind the class that God can do whatever we ask Him to when we pray. He doesn’t always do things like we think He will. Ask class members if there is anything they would like to ask God to do.

◆ Close in prayer, thanking God for the hope Jesus gives for life that lasts forever.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 13: The Hour Is Near

Lesson Focus

Jesus revealed Himself to us and gave His life to draw all people to Himself. We can recognize His sacrifice and respond with thankfulness to Him.

Focal Text

John 11:55-57; 12:20-37, 44-50

Memory Verse

“And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will attract all people toward Me.” (John 12:32)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Study Outline Poster for the lesson:

The Hour is Near

John 11:55-57; 12:20-37, 44-50
 The Plot of the People — John 11:55-57
 The Plan of God — John 12:20-37
 The Path for Success — John 12:44-50
 This Lesson and Our Lives

- ◆ Bring a roll of paper to make a timeline banner of what happened to Jesus after He raised Lazarus from the dead.

Connect with Life

1. Ask: *What do you think is success for each of these people: politician, investor, parent, athlete, pastor?*
2. Say: *Many in America value success above anything else. Our history is filled with stories of people who came to this land with nothing and with hard work made a success of their lives. Some people have become successful by writing books on “How to be Successful.”*
3. Say: *Religion is celebrated when it is a success. Churches are said to be successful if more people are baptized, more money is given, and more people are coming. Church leaders are thought to be failures if their churches shrink or do not grow.*

4. Say: *This interest in “success” seems strange when we study our lesson today. The cross is the center of our faith. But in the eyes of the world, there is nothing successful about a death on a cross. In Jesus’ time, a cross was a symbol of shame and failure. The religious leaders were out to kill Him. His followers were leaving, and in the end, even deserted Him. But Jesus kept going towards the cross and claimed that when He was lifted up, it would draw all people to Him.*

Guide the Study

5. Make a timeline banner of what happened to Jesus during Passover week, the final days before Jesus was arrested and sentenced to die. Begin with John 11:55 and work through 12:50. Take each reference verse in order, read and ask the class to list what happened so it can be added to the banner. The list will look something like this:

1. Orders issued for Jesus’ arrest. John 11:57
 2. Martha and her family host dinner for Jesus. John 12:1-2
 3. etc.

6. Continue making the banner, using these verses:
 John 12:3 – Mary puts expensive perfume on Jesus.
 John 12:10 – Death planned for Lazarus also.
 John 12:13-14 – People parade Jesus into Jerusalem.
 John 12:20-21 – Philip brings Greeks to talk with Jesus.
 John 12:23 – Jesus says that it is now time.
 John 12:26 – Jesus calls people to declare their faith in Him.
 John 12:27-28 – God responds out loud to Jesus’ prayer.
 John 12:32-33 – Jesus predicts His death on the cross.
 John 12:37, 42 – Most Jewish leaders reject Jesus, but some believe.

7. Circle these 5 names on the banner: Martha, Mary, Lazarus, Philip, and Jewish leaders. Point out that the time was at the beginning of the Feast of Passover, and the city was filled with visitors. The people looked for Jesus, but the leaders were out to arrest Him. As Jesus became more popular, the leaders also threatened Lazarus.

8. Read John 11:5-12:2. Ask: *Why did Martha give a dinner for Jesus? Do you think she might have been afraid because of the threats from the authorities?*

9. Read John 12:3-8. Ask: *Why did Mary give such an expensive gift to Jesus? Do you think she knew He was going to die?*

10. Read John 12:12-16. Discuss what Lazarus might have been thinking on the day of the big parade. Would he have been surprised that Jesus chose a donkey to ride on instead of a white horse?

11. Read John 12:20-29. Ask: *Was Philip surprised that the Greeks wanted to know about Jesus? What do you think Jesus meant when He said, "The hour has come"?* Explain that the Greeks were outsiders, and this showed God's love for all people (John 3:16). "The hour has come" was about Jesus' coming death. Point out that the Passover time gives special meaning to Jesus' sacrifice. Discuss how Jesus was showing that those who follow Him must also be willing to sacrifice for Him.

12. Read John 12:30-37. Ask:
—*What did the Jewish religious leaders think of the "voice from heaven"?*
—*What did they think Jesus meant when He said He would be "lifted up"?*
—*After hearing of Jesus' miracles and teachings, why did they still refuse to believe in him?*

13. Read John 12:44-50. State that Jesus ended His teachings by calling for a decision to believe in Him as the Messiah of God. Ask: *What is your response?*

Encourage Application

14. Give each person a one-quarter sheet of brown construction paper. Ask that they tear a cross from the paper as you point out the following:
—The purpose of being a Christian is not to make us happy and successful, cure our diseases, resolve our problems, save marriages, or fix finances. We should never forget the cross. It is true that faith in Christ is the best way to live, but the purpose of the gospel is not to make us more comfortable. The purpose of the gospel is to bring glory to God.
—Jesus willingly gave Himself to be lifted up on a cross. There was nothing easy or comfortable about it. Jesus was concerned with only one thing; to bring glory to God by redeeming the world.
—Followers of Jesus should have the same purpose. It is not always easy and requires sacrifice. But when we

follow the example of Jesus we will be successful in the kingdom of God. That is the right kind of success.

15. Ask members to write on their crosses, "Sacrifice and Service." Read Galatians 2:20 and close with prayer thanking God for Jesus' sacrifice for us.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

◆ Write this equation on the board:
Success = a dream + work to make it happen + reaching the dream + fame and reward

◆ Say: *We will see in this lesson that the math was different for Jesus. Cross out "fame and reward" and write instead, "arrest and death."*

Encourage Application

◆ Say: *Jesus is the Light and Savior of the world. His light was shining in all of His powerful works and was shining the brightest when He was "lifted up" (12:32).*

◆ Ask: *What does Jesus' death almost 2,000 years ago mean for us now?* Explain that sin is in all people. Jesus is the only perfect One. He did not have sin in Him. When Jesus died on the cross, all our sin was placed on Him. Sin could not win over Jesus. Death is a result of sin. But death had no hold on Jesus, and Jesus was raised from the dead. Evil and death died with Jesus forever.

◆ Explain that when we accept Jesus, we accept His gift of dying for us to defeat evil and death. His Spirit now lives in us. We have joined the Light and Life—Jesus. Jesus invites everyone to believe and walk in the light with Him. Read aloud together the Memory Verse in the Study Guide.

◆ Read and discuss "Things to Think About" in the Study Guide.

◆ Sing "I Saw the Cross of Jesus" or "Near the Cross."

◆ Close with prayer thanking God for Jesus and asking Him to help us show others the way.

Teaching Guide

Christmas Lesson: Jesus, God with Us

Lesson Focus

Jesus, Who is God with us, came to bring salvation.

Focal Text

Matthew 1:18-25

Memory Verse

“A Son will be born to her. You will give Him the name Jesus because He will save His people from the punishment of their sins.”
(Matthew 1:21)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Make sure a marker board (or flip chart) and markers will be available for use.
- ◆ Prepare a Study Outline Poster for the lesson:

<p>Jesus, God with Us Matthew 1:18-25 Mary—A Virgin Mother Joseph—A Good Man Jesus—God’s Unique Son on Earth</p>

- ◆ Find baby items or pictures for Step 1 below.
- ◆ Locate pictures of Joseph, Mary and Jesus or bring a nativity set with these 3.

Connect with Life

1. Display baby items in the classroom—things usually needed when a baby is born (a car seat, stroller, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, blankets, clothes, diaper bag, etc.). You may invite a new parent to attend with his or her baby for a few minutes as you begin. As members arrive, allow them to walk around and examine the items. Ask class members: *What are some of the things you used for your baby? What did your parents have for a new baby?* Then ask: *What does a family need to provide for a new baby?*

2. Say: *In today’s study we will look at two parents who had none of these things. In fact, when their baby was born, they didn’t even have a crib in which to place Him.*

Mary and Joseph had none of these helpful things—but they had faith.

Guide the Study

3. Refer to Matthew 1:1-17 (not printed in the Study Guide), and note that the book of Matthew shows the family of Jesus from Abraham to Joseph. Read aloud verse 16 and ask: *Why do you think Matthew describes Joseph as “the husband of Mary” even though Mary was his mother?* Point out that while Joseph was not Jesus’ biological father, he was recognized as His legal father.

4. Read Matthew 1:18-19. List on the board words that describe the feelings Joseph and Mary might have experienced. (Responses might include surprise, fear, joy, disappointment, shame, trust.)

5. Discuss the meaning of “being promised in marriage” from the Study Guide. Note that it was as final as marriage.

6. Ask:

—*What was the importance of Joseph being called a “good man?”*

—*What was Joseph’s plan before the angel spoke to him?*

—*What do you think Joseph might have felt when he thought his future wife had been unfaithful?*

7. Write the following words on the board: “Promise, Plan, Gift.” Point out that the Christmas story is a story of faith—God fulfilling His promise; Joseph and Mary believing and fully following God’s plan; and people of all races, cultures, and backgrounds responding to God’s gift.

8. Comment that the good news of Christmas can teach us that everything is not always as it seems. Joseph’s worry turned to hope and promise — and that is the real story of Christmas.

9. Read Matthew 1:20-23. Discuss the angel which appeared to Joseph in a dream. Ask the following questions for discussion:

—*What did the angel tell Joseph about his fears?*

- What did the angel tell Joseph about Mary?*
- What did the angel tell Joseph about God's plan?*
- What did the angel tell Joseph to do?*

10. Ask the class to read Matthew 1:24-25. State that Matthew's story of Christmas teaches us the need for obedience. Ask:

- How did Joseph respond to the angel?*
- How did Joseph demonstrate he was "a good man"?*
- Why was Joseph's obedience so important?*
- What did Joseph name his son?*
- Why is that important?*

11. Ask: *What can Joseph's experience teach us about faith?* Write on the board the following suggestions:

- Know that God is always at work around you.
- Listen for God's voice.
- Trust what God says.
- Do what God says to do (be obedient).

12. Discuss how the list in Step 10 above compares or contrasts with the list in Step 3 that describes how Mary and Joseph felt.

13. Comment that faith is not a one-time act of belief or obedience. Ask: *What are some ways Joseph showed that he kept having faith on his family's road trip to Egypt?*

14. Discuss the miracle of the virgin birth. Read "Jesus, God's Unique Son on Earth," from the Study Guide. Write the names used for Jesus on the board and their definitions.

Encourage Application

15. Write the word FAITH going down the side of the board and then make an acrostic with these words:
Forsaking All I Trust Him.

16. Display the Nativity or Christmas pictures. Ask: *What kind of faith does it take to be a teenager and find out that God is going to use you to parent His Son, the Savior of the world (Mary's story)?*

17. Ask: *What kind of faith does it take to find out you are having a baby who has no biological father (Believing the virgin birth)?*

18. Ask: *What kind of faith does it take to follow a star, trusting you will find a Savior (The story of the Wise Men)?*

19. Ask: *What kind of faith does it take to live as if God*

is really with us (Immanuel, having Christmas faith every day)?

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

◆ Ask class members to make an acrostic of "Christmas" and think of words and phrases that describe how those who are not Christians see Christmas as a holiday. For example, the letter "C" could be Cooking, "S" could be Shopping or School holidays, "T" could be Taking the family to the grandparents' house, and so on.

◆ Discuss how early in the fall stores begin showing Christmas decorations and say: *It might be best to remember that many of the most important things we do at Christmas are really the simplest ones.* Explain that this study from Matthew begins very simply: "The birth of Jesus was like this."

Encourage Application

◆ Lead class members to respond to the following questions:

- What is the importance of "God with us"?*
- How can that truth change our lives?*
- How can that truth become real to each person?*

◆ Ask: *What can we learn from Joseph and Mary's faith this Christmas?*

◆ Instruct the class to imagine that God sent an angel to visit you. Discuss what you would do if you heard:
—*Fear not, I want your child to be dedicated to me, and you will need to get your child ready for that.*

—*Fear not, I am working in the life of a person in your area that others don't like, and I need you to show God's grace and love to this person, including telling this person how to become a Christian.*

—*Fear not, act in love toward _____ (insert the name of a friend, relative, etc.), even though you have trouble understanding what is going on in their life right now.*

◆ Discuss "Things to Think About" and sing, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

◆ Invite members to consider silently this question as you close with prayer, *How can I make Christ, instead something or someone else, the focus of Christmas this year?*