

The Gospels

(God's True Story)

Pre-Session Warm Up

[Teacher, review what we have learned so far about the Bible.] Last week we finished talking about the Old Testament. Today we begin learning about the books of the New Testament.

The New Testament is the part of the Bible written *after* the Lord Jesus came to earth. Here we find the stories about the life of Jesus, about His disciples, and about the early church. The last book of the New Testament tells what it will be like when the Lord Jesus comes the second time.

Opening Prayer

Father, thank You for having these four men write down the stories of Jesus. Now we can come to a fuller understanding of who You are and just how wonderful Your plan of salvation is. Cause us now to open the eyes of our heart so that we might see Jesus more clearly this morning. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse:

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31)

Lesson

The word *gospel* means “good news.” And that’s just what we find in the first 4 books of the New Testament. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John tell us the story of Jesus’ life on earth.

By reading all four Gospels, we can get a full view of what Jesus was really like during His life on earth.

Matthew

Matthew wrote especially for the Jews. He presented Jesus as the Christ—the Messiah—the King who had been promised in the Old Testament. He points to 128 Old Testament prophecies fulfilled during the life of the Lord Jesus! Matthew clearly shows us that Jesus is the Savior God had promised to send.

Mark

Mark presents Jesus as the One who willingly became a servant. He came to suffer and give His life that we might be saved. In almost every chapter of Mark we see the Lord working by doing miracles (chapters 1-11).

Mark 10:45 is the key verse in his book. Look it up and let’s read it.

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Jesus, the Suffering Servant, is our great example. And once we know Him as Savior, He wants us to be servants, too.

Mark 10:43

But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant,

Luke

Luke was a doctor, and he shows Jesus as the Son of Man. We learn of His entry into the world as a human being (Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20)

Luke 1:26-27

In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, (27) to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David.

Luke tells us about the childhood of Jesus (2:40-52).

Luke 2:40

There the child grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on him.

Because Jesus was in a human body like you and me, He knows how we feel and can sympathize with us and pray for us.

John

John points to Jesus as the Son of God.

John 20:31 [Our Memory Verse is in New King James]

But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.

John wanted us to know that Jesus was just who He said He was, God in the flesh!

How We Know Jesus Is God

The Gospels give us four accounts of one wonderful message. They show us clearly that Jesus is God the Son. They tell us about the miracles Jesus did while He was here. Jesus could heal the sick (Mark 2:8-12) and make the blind see...

Luke 7:21

At that very time, Jesus cured many people of their diseases, illnesses, and evil spirits, and he restored sight to many who were blind.

And He cured many diseases...

Matthew 11:5

the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor.

He could even bring the dead back to life (John 11). He did those things because He loved people. But most of all He did them so that people would understand who He is.

Jesus did other things no one else could do: He walked on water (Matthew 14:25), calmed the wind and the sea (Luke 8:24), and fed five thousand people with just five loaves of bread and two small fish (Matthew 14:17-21). Jesus did all these things because He wanted us to know that He was the Son of God.

The Bible tells us that while Jesus was on earth, He had a body like you and me. His body got hungry and tired. And it felt pain. Jesus was sometimes tempted to do wrong as we are. But one thing was different about Him: Jesus never sinned.

The Bad News: We Have Sinned

What is sin? It is anything that displeases God. The Bible says that all have sinned (Romans 3:23). *All* means every person who has ever lived. Every person, that is, except Jesus (1 Peter 2:21, 22). The Bible also says that the punishment for sin is death (Romans 6:23). Unless our sin is taken care of, we will be separated from God in a place of punishment forever and ever.

The Good News: We Can Be Forgiveness

Jesus died on the cross, was buried, and rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4). He gave His blood so that our sins could be forgiven. Why did He have to die like that? The Bible tells us that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. (Hebrews 9:22b.)

The good news is that you and I can have our sins forgiven! All you have to do is accept the Lord Jesus as your Savior from sin—believe that He died to take the punishment you deserved, and you will be saved (Acts 16:31).

Jesus' Plan for His Disciples

God's plan is for everyone to hear the good news so they can be saved (Matt 18:14). But how will they hear? While Jesus was here on earth, He chose twelve men to take the good news to all the world.

Jesus carefully taught these men and others. He told them about His love for the people of the world (John 3:16). He told them how to live (Matthew 5). He taught them how to pray (Matthew 6:9-13). He told them that He would die and rise again — even though they didn't understand until after it had happened (Luke 24:37-45). He taught them how He was going to heaven to prepare a place for them (John 14:2). He promised that after He left He would send the Holy Spirit to be their teacher (John 14:26). And Jesus promised He would return for them (John 14:3).

Jesus' Plan for You and Me

As we read through the Gospels, Jesus shares that same teaching with us. He wants us to learn all about Him and His plan for salvation so that we can share it with others. Jesus' last words in the Gospel of Mark give His last command to us. Let's find and read it.

Mark 16:15

And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone."

Jesus wants us to go and tell everyone we can about the good news that He took the punishment for our sins. What an important job! We need to read the Gospels to get to know Jesus better so we can tell others about Him.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for Your marvelous plan of salvation! Where would we be without You? Give us a desire in our hearts to learn all we can about You so that we can share the good news with all of our friends. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Game Center

Musical chairs:

Place chairs back to back in a row, and tape half of a construction paper of different colors to the back of each chair. The teacher keeps the other half. Play music and have children walk around the chairs. Stop the music and have children find a seat.

The teacher chooses a half sheet of paper. Whoever is seated in a chair with the matching color must stand and answer a Lesson Review question. If more than 1 child has the color, they will form a team and answer the question together.

Toss-For-It

Lay out a grid with masking tape. Divide it into 48 squares. Label each square with a Bible book name and a number to represent the point value of the square. Divide children into 2 teams. Players toss bean bags onto the grid from a distance. Then he or she must tell if the book touched by the bean bag is a book of Law, History, Poetry, etc. The players receive the points for each Bible book they can correctly identify by category. The team with the highest score wins.

Bible Ping Pong

Divide the class into two teams. Choose a child from each team to compete with each other.

One child names the first book of the Bible, the other names the second book, and so on. They alternate until one misses or they finish through the Gospel of John. If a child misses, he is replaced by another. The child who stays up the longest is the "Ping-Pong" champion of the day.

Or, use the following questions in a game of your choice:

1. What are the names of first four books of the New Testament? (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.)
2. What does the word *gospel* mean? (Good News)
3. Why are the first four books of the New Testament called Gospels? (They tell the good news that Jesus came to earth to save us from our sins.)
4. Who can share the gospel? (Let children share the gospel, helping them to include Jesus' birth, perfect life, death, burial, and resurrection.)
5. Which gospel clearly shows us that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior that God had promised to send? (Matthew)
6. Which gospel presents Jesus as the suffering servant? (Mark)
7. Which gospel shows us the human side of Jesus? (Luke)
8. Which gospel shows us the God side of Jesus? (John)
9. How do we know that Jesus is God? (He did things that are humanly impossible.)
10. What were some of the miracles that Jesus performed? (walked on water, calmed the wind and the sea, fed 5,000 with 5 loaves and 2 fishes, healed the sick, made the blind to see, and the lame to walk, cleansed the lepers, made the dead alive again, etc.)
11. Why do we need a Savior? (We all have sinned!)
12. Why did Jesus have to die? (He gave His blood so our sins could be forgiven.)
13. Why did Jesus pick His 12 disciples? (To teach them about the Kingdom of God, how to live a life that is pleasing to God, and how to pray, etc. He raised them up to spread the Good News about Him to the people around them.)
14. Why does Jesus want us to learn all about Him and His great plan of salvation? (He wants us to go out into the world around us and tell everyone about the Good News!)