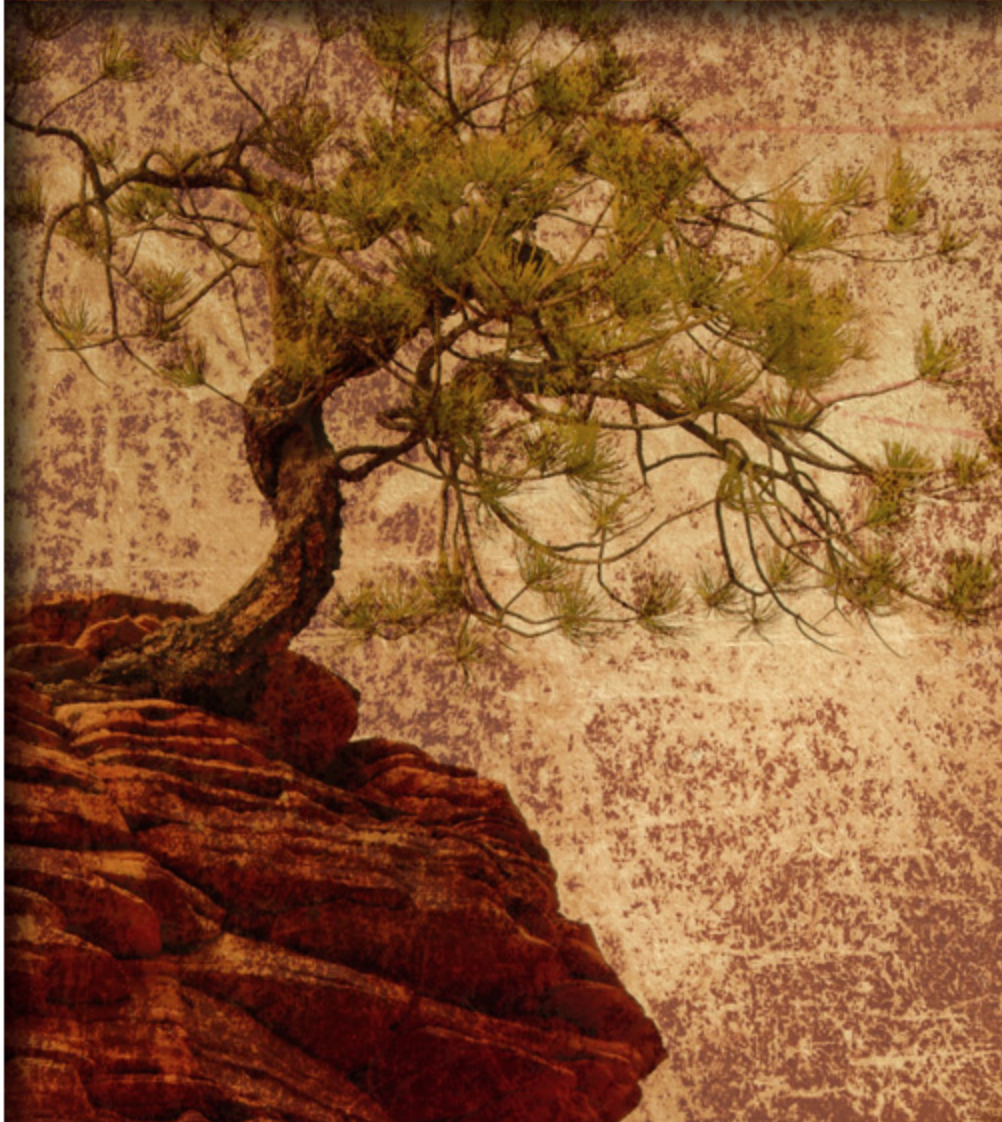


Highlights
IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

A JOURNEY INTO THE LIFE, LAND
AND TIMES OF JESUS CHRIST



BY LOUISE JETER WALKER



Welcome!

Welcome to the Global University family. We hope that you will enjoy these lessons about the wonderful life of Christ. When you have finished the six lessons, you will receive an attractive certificate.

LESSON 1

JESUS—GOD'S GREATEST GIFT

THE BEST GIFT



If you could have anything you wished for what would you choose? Many people would ask to be rich. Others would wish for health, happiness, or friendship: things that money can't buy.

You might ask for happiness that would never end. But who could make you live forever? Only the Person who made you and gave you life could give you eternal happiness. This is God who made the heavens and earth and everything in them.

Everlasting happiness is not just something to wish for. God loves you so much that He sent His Son Jesus, to be your friend. Those who receive Him will have eternal happiness. So Jesus is the best gift you could have.

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Global University, 1211 South Glenstone Springfield, Missouri 65804 USA
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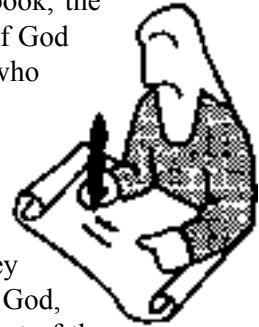
For You to Do

Underneath some of the questions are three possible answers. Put an X beside the one that you think is best.

1. Which would you rather have?
... a) Riches
... b) Popularity
... c) A friend who would give me eternal happiness

GOD'S PROMISE

Of course, you want to know how to receive this greatest of gifts. God tells you about it in His wonderful book, the Bible. We call it the Word of God because God told the men who wrote it just what to write.



Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, God told the prophets what was going to happen. They wrote these messages from God, or prophecies, in the first part of the Bible. God promised to send His Son to be the Savior of the world. The prophets wrote that:

- The Savior would be born in Bethlehem.
- The Savior would be born of a virgin.
- The Savior would be of David's family.

For You to Do

2. In what book does God tell about the Savior?.....
3. Do you have a Bible or a part of it?.....

THE ANGEL AND MARY

About 675 years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah had written:



Isaiah 7:14. Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

(King James Version)

Immanuel means “God with us.” Finally the time came for this promise of

God to come true. Almost 2,000 years ago, God sent an angel from heaven to earth with a message for a young woman named Mary. Luke, a medical doctor, wrote this in the Bible about Mary’s experience:

Luke 1:26-38. God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a girl promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. The girl’s name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, “Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!”

Mary was deeply troubled by the angel’s message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, “Don’t be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!”

Mary said to the angel, “I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?”

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God’s power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God.” . . .

“I am the Lord’s servant,” said Mary; “may it happen to me as you have said.” And the angel left her.

“The Lord” is another name for God. Mary did not understand what was going to happen but, as a faithful servant of the Lord, she was ready to do whatever He asked.

For You to Do

4. Whom did God choose to be the mother of the Savior?

.....

MARY AND ELIZABETH

Soon after the angel’s message, Mary found that a miracle had taken place in her body. She was going to have a baby who had no earthly father. God had chosen her to be the mother of His Son, the Savior! But Mary faced a great problem. Who would believe what had happened to her? She was engaged to a good man, a carpenter named Joseph. What would he think when he found out she was pregnant? If he accused her of immorality, she could be stoned to death! What should she do?



The angel had spoken of a miracle that God had done for Mary’s cousin Elizabeth. Maybe she would understand. So Mary went to the home of Elizabeth and her husband Zechariah and stayed there three months.

Luke 1:41-43, 46-49. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and said in a loud voice, “You are the most blessed of all women, and blessed is the child you will bear! Why should this great thing happen to me, that my Lord’s mother comes to visit me?”

Mary said: “My heart praises the Lord; my soul is glad because of God my Savior, for he has remembered me, his lowly servant! From now on all people will call me happy, because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me.”

Mary was a lovely young woman who worshiped God and knew His Word. She was intelligent, courteous, faithful, obedient, humble, and good. We are grateful to her for her part in bringing the Savior into the world. The angel and Elizabeth both recognized that God had chosen Mary to be the mother of the Savior but they did not worship her. Mary herself acknowledged her need of the Savior when she said, "My soul is glad because God is my Savior."

For You to Do

5. What was the name of Mary's cousin?
.....

THE ANGEL AND JOSEPH



What did Joseph do when he learned that Mary was pregnant?

Matthew 1:19-21, 24-25. Joseph was a man who always did what was right, but he did not want to disgrace Mary publicly; so

he made plans to break the engagement privately. While he was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived. She will have a son, and you will name him Jesus—because he will save his people from their sins."

So when Joseph woke up, he married Mary, as the angel of the Lord had told him to. But he had no sexual relations with her before she gave birth to her son. And Joseph named him Jesus.

For You to Do

6. What did the angel tell Joseph?
.... a) To break his engagement.
.... b) To marry Mary. Her baby was by the Holy Spirit.
.... c) To forget about Mary.

BORN IN BETHLEHEM

Augustus Caesar made a law that everyone had to be registered in a census. Mary and Joseph were of the family of David, so they had to go to Bethlehem, David's town, to be registered. That is where the prophet Micah had said that the Savior would be born. There was no room in the hotel for Mary and Joseph. They found shelter in a stable. Jesus was born there. An angel gave the good news to some shepherds near there:



Luke 2:10-14. "Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people. This very day in David's town your Savior was born—Christ the Lord! And this is what will prove it to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased!"

The shepherds found Jesus Christ, the Savior, lying in a manger. They praised God for His great gift. Some wise men also came from other countries to worship Jesus. Afterwards, wicked King Herod tried to kill Jesus but Mary and Joseph escaped with Him to Egypt. Later they went back to Nazareth and Jesus grew up there.

For You to Do

7. What is God's greatest gift?
.... a) Happiness
.... b) Health
.... c) Jesus Christ, the Savior, who gives eternal life

LESSON 2

JESUS—THE GREAT TEACHER

YEARS OF PREPARATION

Jesus learns about people's needs

Jesus grew up in Nazareth, a city of about 15,000 in the province of Galilee. It was a stopping place on a great highway between Jerusalem and the seaports of Tyre and Sidon. Vice and crime were so common that people said, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Jesus saw the sinfulness: the selfishness, corruption, cruelty, and rebellion against God. He saw that men and women were slaves of sin.

As Jesus worked with Joseph in his carpenter shop, He heard the men wishing for freedom from the Roman government. But Jesus knew that political freedom would not solve their problems. What the people needed was freedom from the sin that ruled their lives. He had come to the world to bring them this freedom. His name, Jesus, means Savior. The angel had told Joseph:

Matthew 1:21. "You will name him Jesus—because he will save his people from their sins."

Jesus learns God's Word

Jesus studied God's Word and got ready for His life's work. When He was twelve years old, He understood God's Word better than His teachers. He loved it and always obeyed it.

Jesus is baptized

When Jesus was thirty, He left Nazareth to go from town to town teaching God's Word. God sent



Him to where John the Baptist was preaching. John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River.

Matthew 3:16-17.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. Then heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and

lighting on him. Then a voice said from heaven, "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am pleased."

For You to Do

1. Fill in the blanks:

"Jesus" means

Jesus was baptized in the

River by the Baptist.

God said: "This is my own dear"

2. What would Jesus save His people from?

... a) The Roman government

... b) Poverty and disease

... c) Their sins

ANOINTED FOR GOD'S WORK

Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed with oil to show that the Holy Spirit would help them work for God. The promised Savior was called the Messiah or Christ. Both names mean "anointed." Isaiah the prophet wrote about Him:

Luke 4:18-19. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people."

Isaiah's prophecy came true in Jesus. He went everywhere preaching the good news. He touched sick people and made them well. The blind could see again. Captives of sin found liberty. Jesus said about Isaiah's prophecy, "This passage of Scripture has come true today."

For You to Do

3. Memorize Isaiah's prophecy.
4. What names mean "anointed"?
..... or
5. Why could Jesus heal the sick?
 - a) He knew many remedies.
 - b) He had studied medicine.
 - c) The Spirit of the Lord anointed Him to do it.

JESUS TEACHES A VILLAGE WOMAN

A trip through Samaria



Jesus chose twelve men to be His helpers. We call them His disciples or students. Two of them, Matthew and John, wrote about Jesus' life. John tells about visiting Samaria.

The shortest road from Galilee to Jerusalem went through the province of Samaria. Many travelers took the long way around because they hated the Samaritans. They looked down on the Samaritans because they were of a different race and had different customs. But Jesus did not feel that way toward the Samaritans. He loved everybody. God had promised to send the light of salvation to all nations. So Jesus went through Samaria to take God's salvation there too.

For You to Do

6. Was Jesus friendly to Samaritans?
 - a) No. They were of another race and religion.
 - b) Yes. Jesus loved everyone.
 - c) No. They were very sinful.

The water that satisfies

At the village of Sychar, Jesus sat down by the well while His disciples went to buy food. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus

asked her for a drink. She was surprised that Jesus would speak to her.

John 4:10-14. Jesus answered, "If you only knew what God gives and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would ask him, and he would give you life-giving water."

"Sir," the woman said, "you don't have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where would you get that life-giving water?"

Jesus answered, "Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring which will provide him with life-giving water and give him eternal life."

When our body needs water, we get thirsty. Our spirit needs something just as much as our body needs water. Until we find it, we are unsatisfied and spiritually thirsty.

The Samaritan woman had tried to find satisfaction in love. She had been married five times and was living with a man who wasn't her husband.

Jesus knew all about her as soon as He saw her. He knew she would never be happy until her sins were forgiven. So He told her about her sins. The woman admitted that it was just as Jesus said.

The Samaritan woman realized that Jesus was a man of God, a prophet. She was sure that He could help her. She asked about how to worship God. Memorize Jesus' answer:

John 4:24. "God is Spirit, and only by the power of his Spirit can people worship him as he really is."

Jesus also let her know that He was the Messiah. How happy the Samaritan woman was to meet the Savior! From then on her life would be different. She ran to tell her friends about Jesus. They too needed this living water.

John 4:41-42. Many more believed because of his message, and they told the woman, "We believe now, not because of what you said, but because we ourselves have heard him, and we know that he really is the Savior of the world."

People try to find happiness in things, love, sex, drugs, alcohol, education, power, religion, good works, or withdrawal from life. None of this really satisfies. Only Jesus and His salvation can quench your thirst.

Prayer

God who made me, You know what my thirsty spiritual needs are. Please forgive my sins. Give me the living water to satisfy my thirst. Teach me to worship You in spirit and in truth. Let me meet Jesus and know for myself that He is the Savior of the world.

For You to Do

- 7. Have you found real satisfaction in Jesus?.....
- Would you like to?.....

JESUS TEACHES A RICH MAN

Once a rich man came running up to Jesus, knelt before Him, and asked, "Good teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?" He was trying to be good enough to get into that beautiful home in heaven. The rich man hadn't killed anybody or committed adultery. He hadn't stolen, lied, or cheated. He honored his parents.



Such a good man he was, and yet he lacked something. No one is good enough to get into heaven. His sin was selfishness. He thought more of his own comfort than he did of helping others. He loved money more than he loved God. He needed salvation just

as much as the Samaritan woman. To have true happiness and eternal life, we must put God first.

Mark 10:21. Jesus looked straight at him with love and said, "You need only one thing. Go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me."

Jesus would have given him what he was looking for—eternal life—but the poor rich man went away sad without it. He chose riches on earth rather than riches in heaven.

For You to Do

- 8. Do you think the rich man made a good choice?.....
- 9. Will trying to be good get you into heaven?.....

If you have a spiritual need or problem, your teacher will be glad to pray for you.

LESSON 3

JESUS—PROPHET AND KING

A PROPHET LIKE MOSES

Moses was a great prophet and leader. He led his people out of slavery and gave them the laws of God. God showed Moses that the Messiah would also be a prophet to give God's message to the people. He would lead people out of the slavery of sin. He would be King of their lives and give them new rules to live by.

Deuteronomy 18:18-19. "I will send them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will tell him what to say, and he will tell the people everything I command. He will speak in my name, and I will punish anyone who refuses to obey him."

For years the people were judged by the Law that God gave Moses. Moses wrote that this would be changed when the Messiah came. Everyone would be judged by what the Messiah said. And so today when we want to know how God wants us to live, we read Jesus' teachings, the Messiah's law.

For You to Do

1. What great prophet received God's laws before Jesus?.....
2. Who was the prophet like Moses?
.....

RULES OF JESUS' KINGDOM

Who will be happy

Out on the mountainside Jesus taught the basic principles of life for His followers. We call His message the "Sermon on the Mount." He spoke of the happiness that God gives.

Matthew 5:3-12. "Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!"



"Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them!"

"Happy are those who are humble; they will receive what God has promised!"

"Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires; God will satisfy them fully!"

"Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them!"

"Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God!"

"Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children!"

"Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!"

"Happy are you when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers. Be happy and glad, for a great reward is kept for you in heaven. This is how the prophets who lived before you were persecuted."

What the members of the Kingdom are

God gave the basic principles of what to do and what not to do through Moses. They have not changed. But Jesus' law goes far beyond Moses' law. Moses taught the people what to do. Jesus teaches us what to be. We are to be like salt, giving a good flavor to life, and like light, showing people the way to God.

Matthew 5:13-16. "You are like salt for all mankind . . .

"You are like light for the whole world . . .

"Your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven."

For You to Do

3. Whose law deals mostly with what a person does?
4. Whose law deals with what a person is?.....
5. Jesus says we are like and for the world.

Rules for thoughts and feelings



The laws of Moses are a standard by which men can judge a man's actions. Jesus gives us a standard by which each person must judge his own attitudes. A person may be very careful not to break the Law but still be full of sin inside.

Sinful thoughts, feelings, and desires cause sinful acts. Jesus teaches us to clean up inside so that we can live a clean life.

Matthew 5:17. "Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true."

Matthew 5:21-22. "You have heard that people were told in the past, 'Do not commit murder'; . . . But now I tell you: . . . whoever calls his brother a worthless fool will be in danger of going to the fire of hell."

Matthew 5:27-28. "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But now I tell you: anyone who looks at a woman and wants to possess her is guilty of committing adultery with her in his heart."

For You to Do

6. Does God hold us responsible for our feelings and thoughts?
... a) No. No one can help what he feels and thinks.
... b) Yes. Our thoughts and feelings cause our actions.

The law of love

The main law in Jesus' kingdom is the law of love: love for God and for one another.



Matthew 22:35-40. A teacher of the Law . . . asked, "Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"



Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and the most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like it: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' The whole Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets depend on these two commandments."

Matthew 5:43-45. "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your friends, hate your enemies.' But now I tell you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may become the sons of your Father in heaven. For he makes his sun to shine on bad and good people alike, and gives rain to those who do good and to those who do evil."

For You to Do

7. Read this section over again.
8. Memorize the two commandments that Jesus said were the greatest.

KEEPING JESUS' RULES

Jesus says that your life depends on keeping His rules. They are the secret of a happy life, both now and after death.

Luke 6:46-49. "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and yet don't do what I tell you? Anyone who comes to me and listens to my words and obeys them . . . is like a man who, in building his house, dug deep and laid the foundation on rock. The river flooded over and hit that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But anyone who hears my words and does not obey them is like a man who built his house without laying a foundation; when the flood hit that house it fell at once—and what a terrible crash that was!"



The only trouble with trying to keep Jesus' rules is this: no one can do it by himself. We just aren't made that way. We have sin in our hearts: selfishness and rebellion that keep us from living up to the standard. What can we do?

Jesus told us the secret in a conversation with Nicodemus, a religious leader. God will change us so that we will want to do what Jesus shows us to do. And His Holy Spirit will help us do it. Jesus called this being born again. We become children of God and have a new nature.

Millions of people have had this experience. They have found a wonderful new life following Jesus here on earth. And they are looking forward to sharing His beautiful, eternal home in heaven.

Prayer

God, I don't want my life to crash in ruins. Please take away the bad things in my nature. Make me over again and put Your love in me. Help me to build my life on Jesus' teachings. Please make me Your child.

Amen.

For You to Do

9. In this list, draw a circle around the things that Jesus said to do:

- | | |
|-------------------|---------|
| Love God | Judge |
| Get angry | Steal |
| Good works | Hate |
| Pray for enemies | Forgive |
| Love one another | Crimes |
| Obey Jesus' words | Murder |

10. Which life will stand the storm of judgment and last forever?

- a) The one built on obedience to Jesus' teaching
- b) The one built to please the person himself
- c) The one built to please other people

11. If you have already been born again, thank God for making you His child. If you have not yet been born again, do you want to be?

If so, read the above prayer to God. Talk with Him about it.

LESSON 4

JESUS TEACHES FORGIVENESS

A FATHER FORGIVES HIS SON

Jesus tells a story

Jesus often told short stories called parables to teach spiritual truth. Here is one of them:

Luke 15:11-32. “There was once a man who had two sons. The younger one said to him, ‘Father, give me my share of the property now.’ So the man divided his property between his two sons. After a few days the younger son sold his part of the property and left home with the money. He went to a country far away, where he wasted his money in reckless living. He spent everything he had. Then a severe famine spread over that country, and he was left without a thing.

“So he went to work for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him out to his farm to take care of the pigs. He wished he could fill himself with the bean pods the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything to eat. At last he came to his senses and said, ‘All my father’s hired workers have more than they can eat, and here I am about to starve! I will get up and go to my father and say, ‘Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired workers.’” So he got up and started back to his father.

“He was still a long way from home when his father saw him; his heart was filled with pity, and he ran, threw his arms around his son, and kissed him. ‘Father,’ the son said, ‘I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son.’

“But the father called to his servants. ‘Hurry!’ he said. ‘Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. Then go and get the prize calf and kill it, and let us celebrate

with a feast! For this son of mine was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.’ And so the feasting began.



“In the meantime the older son was out in the field. On his way back, when he came close to the house, he heard the music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him, ‘What’s going on?’ ‘Your brother has come back home,’ the servant answered, ‘and your father has killed the prize calf, because he got him back safe and sound.’ The older brother was so angry that he would not go into the house; so his father came out and begged him to come in. But he spoke back to his father, ‘Look, all these years I have worked for you like a slave, and I have never disobeyed your orders. What have you given me? Not even a goat for me to have a feast with my friends! But this son of yours wasted all your property on prostitutes, and when he comes back home, you kill the prize calf for him!’ ‘My son,’ the father answered, ‘you are always here with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be happy, because your brother was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.’”

For You to Do

1. Fill in the blanks: Jesus told to help the people understand important truths.

Lessons from the story

There were two ways to leave an inheritance: by a will, or by gifts to the heirs while the owner was still living. The younger son was anxious to get away from home to enjoy life in his own way. He wanted to choose his own friends. He didn’t want his father or brother telling him what to do. So the father gave him his part of the inheritance, and he left home.



As long as his money lasted, he had “friends.” When his money was gone, so were his “friends.” Finally, half starved and envying the pigs that he was taking care of, he realized what a fool he had been. He went home sorry for his sins, confessing them, and asking for forgiveness. He hoped that his father would give him a job.

What a surprise when his father welcomed him home and gave him back his place in the family! He didn’t deserve this treatment, but his father still loved him in spite of his sin.

In this parable the father represents our heavenly Father—God. The sons stand for two kinds of people who are lost. The younger boy is the sinner who is sorry for his wrongdoing and comes back to God for forgiveness.

The older son, proud of how good he was and ashamed of his younger brother, had worked for his father. But his angry, disrespectful words show what was really important to him. In his heart he was as far from home as the brother in the far country. He represents those who are proud of their goodness and don’t realize that they too are sinners who need God’s forgiveness. Pride, criticism, and an unforgiving spirit may be worse sins than those of the brother in the far country.

We have all disobeyed our heavenly Father and done wrong. We don’t deserve a place in His wonderful home in heaven. But He invites us to turn our back on sin and come to Him for forgiveness.

Romans 6:23. For sin pays its wage—death; but God’s free gift is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus our Lord.

For You to Do

2. Why did the younger son leave home?
 - a) To get a good job
 - b) To serve humanity
 - c) To have his own way
3. Why did he come home?
 - a) To ask for more money
 - b) To ask for his father’s forgiveness and a job
 - c) To tell about the city
4. Who needs God’s forgiveness?
 - a) Everyone, for all have sinned
 - b) Only very bad people
 - c) Only those who live in a city
5. Memorize Romans 6:23.
6. Have you sinned? Do you need God’s forgiveness?
7. Memorize these words: “Father, . . . I have sinned against God . . . I am no longer fit to be called your son.” You can make these words of the younger son your prayer now. No matter what you have done, God will welcome you home and forgive you because He loves you.

WE MUST FORGIVE

Jesus taught that if we want God to forgive us, we must forgive those who wrong us. Resentment is a sin and a root for other sins. It produces bitterness, criticism, hatred, fighting, and even murder. As long as we hold onto our sins, we can’t be forgiven of them. We must let go and let God take them away. Jesus said:

Matthew 6:15. “If you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive the wrongs you have done.”

For You to Do

8. Has someone wronged you? Ask God to help you forgive and forget it.

JESUS FORGIVES SINNERS

Jesus came to the world for two reasons:

1. To teach us about God and His love.
2. To take the blame for our sins and die in our place so that we can be forgiven.



Since Jesus was going to die for all sinners, He had the right to forgive anyone who came to Him wanting forgiveness for sin. Jesus forgave many sinners and changed their lives completely. One of these was a sinful woman who had probably heard him preach and wanted to show her appreciation. She went into the house of Simon who had invited Jesus and His disciples to dinner. At the feet of Jesus, she cried in repentance for her sins. Simon was shocked that Jesus would let such a bad woman touch His feet. Jesus told him:

Luke 7:41-50. “There were two men who owed money to a moneylender,” Jesus began. “One owed him five hundred silver coins, and the other one fifty. Neither of them could pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Which one, then, will love him more?”

“I suppose,” answered Simon, “that it would be the one who was forgiven more.”

“You are right,” said Jesus. Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your home, and you gave me no water for my feet, but she has washed my feet with her tears The great love she has shown proves that her many sins have been forgiven. But whoever has been forgiven little shows only a little love.”

Then Jesus said to the woman, “Your sins are forgiven.”

The others sitting at the table began to say to themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?”

But Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”



How glad the woman was when Jesus forgave her! The Pharisee and his friends could have this same joy and forgiveness, but they didn't want to admit that they were sinners. They were proud of themselves and of their good works.

The Pharisees asked, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?” Who is it that forgives sins? The Son of God—the Lord Jesus Christ. He still forgives all those who come to Him. We go to His feet in prayer confessing that we are sinners, that we are sorry for our sins and want to get rid of them. In our hearts we hear Him say: “Your sins are forgiven. Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” Jesus' forgiveness brings us joy, peace, and a new life.

Or we can be like the Pharisees and pretend that we aren't sinners. As long as we do this, we can't possibly receive forgiveness for our sins. We must confess them to Jesus and ask for His forgiveness. You must have your sins forgiven before you can have eternal life.

For You to Do

9. Memorize the words of Jesus: “Your sins are forgiven. Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”
10. Has Jesus forgiven your sins? Thank Him for it. Think: What am I doing to show my love for Jesus?

LESSON 5

JESUS DIES IN OUR PLACE

A PLOT AGAINST JESUS

The main religious leaders hated Jesus because He preached against their sins. They were jealous because crowds followed Him. He healed the sick people and even brought several dead people back to life. Jesus fulfilled the prophecies about the Messiah, but still the leaders refused to believe in Him. They decided to arrest Jesus, accuse Him of being a revolutionary, and have Him put to death. However, they were afraid that if they arrested Jesus openly the crowds would defend Him. So they bribed one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, to lead them to Jesus at night.

For You to Do

1. Who were Jesus' enemies?
 - ... a) The common people
 - ... b) Some religious leaders
 - ... c) Roman government officials

THE PASSOVER

The Passover was a celebration of the time when God set His people free from slavery. Every year at the Passover, a lamb was killed as a sacrifice for sin. This was a picture of the coming death of Jesus. When Jesus first began His ministry, John the Baptist had presented Him as "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." To do this, He had to take the punishment for our sins and die in our place. After Jesus ate the Passover supper with His disciples, Judas went to betray Him.

For You to Do

2. How did John introduce Jesus?
 - ... a) As the Son of God
 - ... b) As the Lamb of God who would take away sins
 - ... c) As the promised Messiah

JESUS IN GETHSEMANE

Jesus prays

Jesus knew that Judas was going to betray Him. He could have escaped, but He had come to the world to die in our place. He had told His disciples that He would be crucified and on the third day He would come back to life again. After supper He and His disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane where they often went to pray.



Mark 14:32-36.

They came to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took Peter, James, and John with him. Distress and anguish came over him, and he said to them, "The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me. Stay here and keep watch."

He went a little farther on, threw himself on the ground, and prayed that, if possible, he might not have to go through that time of suffering. "Father," he prayed, "my Father! All things are possible for you. Take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet not what I want, but what you want."

It was hard for Jesus, who had never done anything wrong, to take the blame before God for all the sins of the world. But He wanted to save us from sin. There was no other way to give us eternal life, so He died for our sins.

For You to Do

3. Memorize Jesus' words: "Not what I want, but what you want."

Jesus is arrested

While Jesus prayed, angels came to encourage and strengthen Him. His disciples had gone to sleep. Finally, He woke them up to let them know that the time had come. Judas was leading a crowd who would arrest Him.

Luke 22:52-54. Then Jesus said to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and the elders who had come there to get him, "Did you have to come with swords and clubs, as though I were an outlaw? I was with you in the Temple every day, and you did not try to arrest me." . . . They arrested Jesus and took him away into the house of the High Priest.

For You to Do

4. Which disciple betrayed Jesus?

JESUS ON TRIAL

Jesus was on trial six times:

1. Before a retired High Priest
2. Before the active High Priest
3. Before the Jewish rulers
4. Before Pilate, the Roman governor
5. Before Herod, the governor of a neighboring province
6. Before Pilate, the second time

Mark 15:1. Early in the morning the chief priests met hurriedly with the elders, the teachers of the Law, and the whole Council, and made their plans. They put Jesus in chains, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.



Luke 23:2-3. They began to accuse him: "We caught this man misleading our people, telling them not to pay taxes to the Emperor and claiming that he himself is the Messiah, a king."

Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"So you say," answered Jesus.

John 18:36, 38-40. Jesus said, "My kingdom does not belong to this world; if my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish authorities."

Then Pilate went back outside to the people and said to them, "I cannot find any reason to condemn him. But according to the custom you have, I always set free a prisoner for you during the Passover. Do you want me to set free for you the king of the Jews?"

They answered him with a shout, "No, not him! We want Barabbas!" (Barabbas was a bandit.)

Mark 15:10-15. He knew very well that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous.

But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask, instead, that Pilate set Barabbas free for them. Pilate spoke again to the crowd, "What, then, do you want me to do with the one you call the king of the Jews?"

They shouted back, "Crucify him!"

"But what crime has he committed?" Pilate asked.

They shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

Pilate wanted to please the crowd, so he set Barabbas free for them. Then he had Jesus whipped and handed him over to be crucified.

For You to Do

5. Which governor tried Jesus?

6. What did the governor say?
 - a) I find him guilty.
 - b) I cannot find any reason to condemn him.
 - c) The case is dismissed.

JESUS CRUCIFIED

Prophecies fulfilled

Jesus' enemies lied about Him at the trial. The soldiers made fun of Him, spit on Him, and whipped Him. They marched Him through the streets with two criminals



each one carrying his cross on the way to the hill called Calvary. They nailed His hands and feet to the cross, and He hung there surrounded by a mocking

crowd. This was the Son of God, and these were the people He was dying for—sinners to be saved from eternal death. He could have called down fire from heaven and destroyed them all, but He prayed: "Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing."

Isaiah had written that the Messiah would die for the sins of the people:

Isaiah 53:5-8. But because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the blows he received. All of us were like sheep that were lost, each of us going his own way. But the Lord made the punishment fall on him, the punishment all of us deserved. . . . He was arrested and sentenced and led off to die, . . . He was put to death for the sins of our people.

Other prophets had written that He would be betrayed by a friend. His hands would be pierced. His bones would be out of joint. People would mock Him, give Him vinegar to drink, and gamble for His clothes. This all happened at the crucifixion of Jesus, just as the prophets had said.

For You to Do

7. Read Isaiah's prophecy three times.

Jesus' Death



Not everyone who watched Jesus die was making fun of Him. One of the two thieves believed in Him and was saved from his sins there on the cross beside Jesus.

Luke 23:42-43. And he said to Jesus, "Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King!" Jesus said to him, "I promise you that today you will be in Paradise with me."

Luke 23:44-46. It was about twelve o'clock when the sun stopped shining and darkness covered the whole country until three o'clock; and the curtain hanging in the Temple was torn in two. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father! In your hands I place my spirit!" He said this and died.

Matthew 27:54. When the army officer and the soldiers with him who were watching Jesus saw the earthquake and everything else that happened, they were terrified, and said, "He really was the Son of God!"

For You to Do

8. Write your name in the blanks.
When Jesus died on the cross, He died for the sins of
..... He took the punishment that
deserved so that
..... could be saved and could enjoy eternal life. Thank You, God, for sending Your Son to take the place of

LESSON 6

JESUS THE RISEN LORD

JESUS IS BURIED

Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, religious leaders who believed in Jesus, got permission from Pilate to bury Jesus. They knew He was dead because, just to be sure, one of the soldiers had plunged a spear into His side. They wrapped the body in grave clothes, put it into a new burial cave, and rolled a big stone over the entrance. Nicodemus remembered Jesus' words: that He must be "lifted up," crucified.

John 3:14-16. "The Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life."

Jesus' enemies remembered that He had said, "I will be raised to life after three days." They got Pilate to send some soldiers to guard the grave so that it would be impossible for anyone to steal the body and say that Jesus had risen again.

For You to Do

1. Who buried Jesus?.....
of and
.....
2. Jesus had said that He would come back to life after how many days?
.....
3. Memorize what Jesus had said to Nicodemus in John 3:14-16.

JESUS COMES BACK TO LIFE

Early Sunday morning, the third day after Jesus' crucifixion, He came back to life.

Matthew 28:1-9. As Sunday morning was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the

other Mary went to look at the tomb. Suddenly there was a violent earthquake; an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled the stone away, and sat on it. . . . The guards were so afraid that they trembled and became like dead men.



The angel spoke to the women. "You must not be afraid," he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has been raised, just as he said. Come here and see the place where he was lying. Go quickly, now, and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from death.'" . . . So they . . . ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Peace be with you." They came up to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him.

Jesus showed himself to His friends five times that day. He could go through locked doors and appear or disappear whenever He wanted to because He had a changed, glorified body.

John 20:19. It was late that Sunday evening, and the disciples were gathered together behind locked doors, because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities. Then Jesus came and stood among them. "Peace be with you," he said.

At first the disciples thought they were seeing a ghost. But after they touched Jesus' body and He ate with them, they knew that He had really come back to life. One of the disciples, Thomas, was not with them at the time and wouldn't believe what they said. The next week when they were all together, Jesus suddenly stood there among them again.



John 20:27-29. He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands; then reach out your hand and put it in my side. Stop your doubting, and believe!" Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Do you believe because you see me? How happy are those who believe without seeing me!"

These words of Jesus are especially for us. We don't have to see Him to believe that He actually rose from the dead. For forty days He met with His disciples from time to time and taught them. They wrote about it in the Bible. Their enemies whipped them and put them in jail for telling that Jesus was alive again. But they knew that it was the truth. They would die before they would say that it wasn't so. They were witnesses of Jesus' resurrection.

For You to Do

- 4. On what day of the week did Jesus rise again?
.....
- 5. For how many days did Jesus show himself to His followers?
.....
- 6. What proof did He give them that He wasn't just a spirit?
.... a) He told them to take His word for it.
.... b) He ate with them and had them touch His body.
.... c) He gave them no proof.
- 7. What did Thomas call Jesus?
.....

JESUS TELLS HIS PLAN

Jesus' plan was that every believer should be a witness to tell others about Him. He said:



Matthew 28:18-20.
"I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you."

Jesus knew that His followers would fail unless they had the power of the Holy Spirit in them to carry out His plan. So He said:

Luke 24:46-49. "This is what is written: the Messiah must suffer and must rise from death three days later, and in his name the message about repentance and the forgiveness of sins must be preached to all nations, . . . You are witnesses . . . But you must wait in the city until the power from above comes down upon you."

For You to Do

- 8. Read five times the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-49.
- 9. In Jesus' plan, all of those who believed in Him were to
.... a) form a political kingdom.
.... b) just enjoy salvation.
.... c) be Jesus' witnesses.
- 10. What did Jesus' followers need so they could be His witnesses?
.... a) Power of the Holy Spirit
.... b) Government permission
.... c) Good church buildings

JESUS GOES TO HEAVEN

Acts 1:7-11 Jesus said to them, . . . "When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After saying this, he was taken up to heaven as they watched him, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They still had their eyes fixed on the sky as he went away, when two men dressed in white suddenly stood beside them and said, "Galileans, why are you standing there looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who was taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw him go to heaven."



As the disciples went back to Jerusalem to wait for the Holy Spirit, they thought about what Jesus had told them:

John 14:2-3. "There are many rooms in my Father's house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. . . . I will come back and take you to myself, so that you will be where I am."

For You to Do

- 11. How did Jesus go to heaven?
 - a) He was taken up bodily.
 - b) He went in a spaceship.
 - c) He just disappeared.
- 12. What did Jesus promise to do?
 - a) Wait for the disciples
 - b) Send the Holy Spirit
 - c) Start ruling the world

JESUS KEEPS HIS PROMISES

Ten days after Jesus went to heaven, the Holy Spirit came and filled the believers. From then on they had power to tell others about Jesus. They were thrown in jail and beaten, but they kept on witnessing. They fled from Jerusalem to save their lives, but everywhere they went, they told the good news about the Savior. Jesus has kept His promise. He still fills believers with the Holy Spirit and gives them power to be His witnesses. Jesus will keep His promise to come back again. We expect Him to come very soon.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. The Lord himself will come down from heaven. Those who have died believing in Christ will rise to life first; then we who are living at that time will be gathered up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord.

Are you ready if Jesus should come today? If you like, you may say this prayer:

Prayer

Jesus, I accept You as my Savior and the Lord of my life. Please forgive all my sins. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Help me tell others about You. Whether I die or live until You come, take me to live with You forever in Your home in heaven.

Your Name.....

For You to Do

- 13. Read five times 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. Are you ready for Jesus to come?.....

COMMENTS

How have these lessons helped you?

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